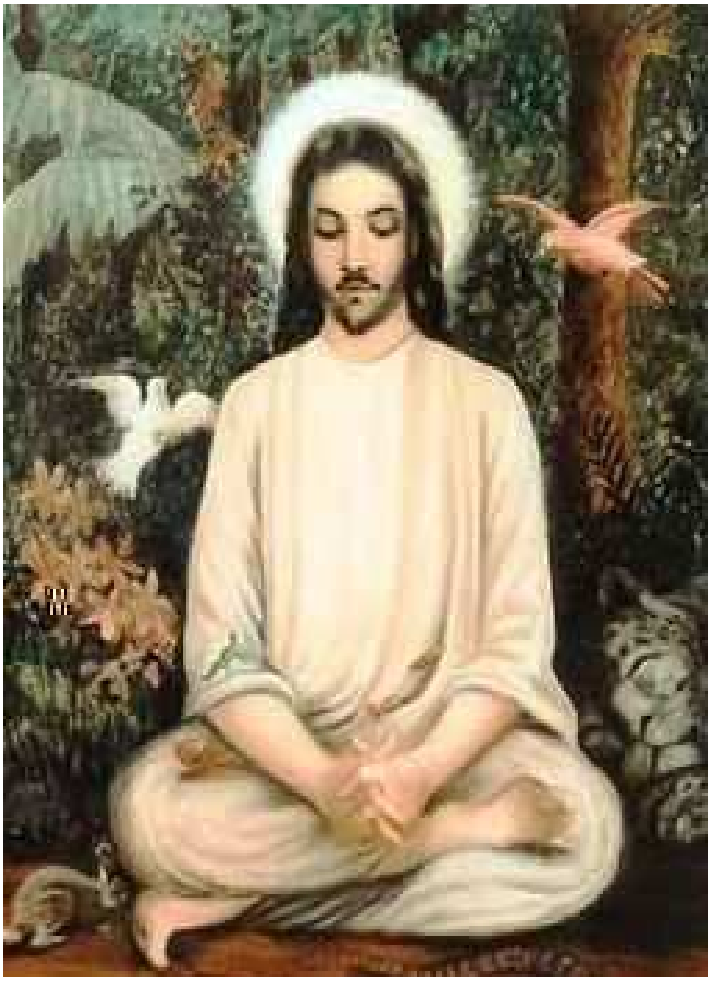
Who Is Jesus?

A Comparative Study on Christianity and Buddhism

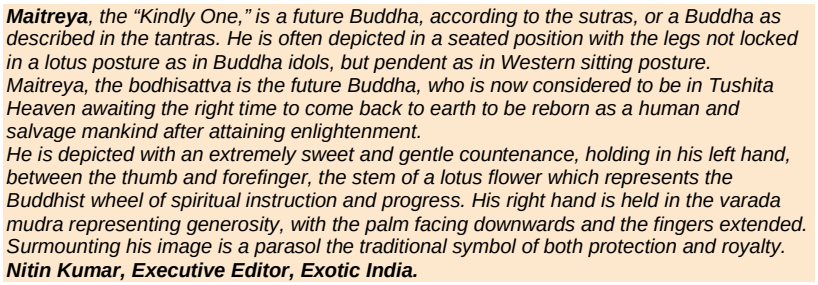
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Tin Htut & Htin Paw

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***Maitreya**, the "Kindly One," is a future Buddha, according to the sutras, or a Buddha as described in the tantras. He is often depicted in a seated position with the legs not locked in a lotus posture as in Buddha idols, but pendent as in Western sitting posture.*
Maitreya, the bodhisattva is the future Buddha, who is now considered to be in Tushita Heaven awaiting the right time to come back to earth to be reborn as a human and salvage mankind after attaining enlightenment.
He is depicted with an extremely sweet and gentle countenance, holding in his left hand, between the thumb and forefinger, the stem of a lotus flower which represents the Buddhist wheel of spiritual instruction and progress. His right hand is held in the varada mudra representing generosity, with the palm facing downwards and the fingers extended. Surmounting his image is a parasol the traditional symbol of both protection and royalty.
Nitin Kumar, Executive Editor, Exotic India.

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Tibetan Thangka painting of Maitreya, the Future Buddha



A statue of Boddhisttava Maitreya of 1st century AD with a crucifixion mark[1]

[1] Roza Bal. F Hassnain & S Olsson 2008; cited from Bodhi Sattava by N Bruknaer & K Berna

This book is dedicated to the Lord *Gotama Buddha* - the Teacher, The *Dhamma* - His Teachings; and the *Samgha* - the Order that preserves and maintains His Teachings;
and finally, to the lineage for a rendezvous at the Miracle of *Gotama Buddha's* image, the closure of His dispensation period and welcoming of the next *Buddha Metteyya*.

Tin Htut and Htin Paw
December 2008

Profile of the Authors

Tin Htut was born in Myanmar (Burma) in 1945. He is a practicing Theravada Buddhist, a physician, a psychiatrist and a research scholar residing in London, United Kingdom.

His contact email is <*tinhtut45@hotmail.co.uk*>. He has published many papers in peer reviewed medical and science journals.

Htin Paw was born in 1935 in Myanmar. A Theravada Buddhist; he is a retired engineer living in California, USA.

PROLOUGE

If someone asked us why he or she should read this book, a simple answer is to broaden your knowledge, to discover the truth, to purify your thoughts and to be salvaged from impermanence and from our sins.

'All our thoughts, even when we have not been consciously aware of it, have been turning into experience for us, now and then or in the future. Our ignorance of this has made the very thread of our existence, cause-and effect, the universal law, somewhat meaningless and intangible for us although it has always been there,' wrote Walsh-Roberts, a spiritualist and a free thinker in his book 'From Atoms to Angels.' [2]

Thoughts are the main cause, either wholesome or unwholesome, that result into appropriate effects. Thought of God results in faith, and faith in a savior, despite differences in expression, will result in salvation.

Purification of thought leads to purification of the mind resulting in purification of the body. It is not easy to practice although it is neither impossible, but with the help of a savior it is can be attainable for all.

This knowledge has been rediscovered by a human teacher, the Buddha, who taught how to purify our thoughts, and when it is lost through time it will again be rediscovered by another Buddha, and many souls will be saved by his teaching.

This book is about the future savior that has been predicted by almost all major religions. It explores who will be the savior, and

[2] From Atoms To Angels. PD Walsh-Roberts 2000

how we will be saved based upon literature, eschatological and archeological evidence.

This book is a free gift, originally meant for Christians who struggle with science's concepts on the God hypothesis & for atheists who do not believe in life after death; nevertheless, everyone who is interested in eschatology and wants to know about life & death may find it useful. Even traditional Buddhists, orthodox Christians, enthusiastic Hindus, Sikhs, moderate Muslims, and Jews may benefit from reading this book if they can put aside "Me & My Religion" for a while and do not regard it as blasphemy or as an apostate.

It tells you '***Who Jesus Really Is'***, solving all mysteries that have shrouded him for all those years. Reading this book might even result in salvation in the future if one develops the faith and started to be righteous.

The second part deals with Buddhist Philosophy from a scientific perspective. It explores into the possibility of life after death, what happened at death, the 31 existences in Samsara,UFOs, parallel world, out-of -body experience, why and how do we reborn and, many more.

If you have interest in futuristic thinking it even tells you what lies ahead for the universe and us, and it even tries to explain and rationalize the existence of God. Some philosophical and hypothetical questions like 'is God eternal, why are we here, why do we suffer; why me, why not others and why does it happen;' all such mind bogging issues are dealt in this book.

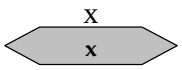
Christians believe Jesus is the Son of God, and some non-Christians in the West believe Jesus is a Bodhisatta, a future Buddha as there are many similarities between the two characters. We try to explore these similarities and have tried to document any evidence on the possibility of Jesus being a future Buddha using extensive literature search, contacting experts and scholars, exploring hard to get books from both Mahayana and Theravada Buddhism, from Puranas, the Torah, the Bible, the gospels that were lost and have been rediscovered, and from Islamic texts .

If Jesus were to become a Buddha in his second coming, anyone who has developed faith and has listened to his discourse could become enlightened immediately; just as it was documented during the time of the present Buddha! Thus, it is in a sense salvation!

Jesus did not necessarily have to die on the cross to save mankind as has been postulated by the Church; what he had fulfilled when he voluntarily endured the pain of crucifixion without loosing patience, without developing animosity and without developing anger towards his persecutors may be enough to meet the criteria for the Ten Perfections of a Future Buddha. Thus, the issue of Jesus as a human, died or did not die of crucifixion may not be relevant to believe in him as the savior.

Some researchers have stated that Jesus was a human, and have even hypothesized that Jesus had lived in India at one time, either before he became publicized at the age of thirty or after he was crucified.

It is believed by Christians that Jesus died on the cross for the atonement of humans' sins in order to salvage mankind.



However, a few researchers on the historical Jesus denied it and believed that Jesus survived crucifixion, escaped to Kashmir, India together with his mother Mary and died there of a natural course. They claimed that his body was enshrined in Roza Bal, a tomb in Srinagar, Kashmir, Northern India which is revered by Hindus and Muslims alike.[3]

If Jesus did not die of crucifixion, would it dissolve the Christian faith regarding salvation by the Messiah?

To tackle this question we need to know the meaning of the word Messiah first. It has been described in Wikipedia [4] as follows:

Messiah (Hebrew: מָשִׁיחַ, Standard *Maší*a, Tiberian *Māšîª*; Aramaic: **אחישמ**, Aramaic/Syriac, *Məšîā*; Arabic: المسيح, *al-Masī*). Literally, Messiah means "The Anointed (One)", typically someone anointed with holy anointing oil. Figuratively, ***anointing is done to signify being chosen for a task;*** so, Messiah means "The Chosen (One)", particularly someone *divinely* chosen.

In Jewish messianic tradition and eschatology, *Messiah* refers to a future King of Israel from the Davidic line, who will rule the people of united tribes of Israel and herald the Messianic Age. In Standard Hebrew, The Messiah is often referred to as חישמה רלמ, Méle ha-Maší*a* (in the Tiberian vocalization pronounced Méle haMMāšîª), literally meaning "the Anointed King."

Christians believe that prophecies in the Hebrew Bible refer to a spiritual savior, and believe Jesus to be that Messiah (Christ). In the (Greek) Septuagint version of the Old Testament, *khristos* was used to translate the Hebrew חָמְשִׁיַ (*Maší*a,), meaning "anointed."

[3] www.TombofJesus.com
[4] www.wikepedia.com , free online encyclopedia

In Islam, Jesus (Issa) is also called the Messiah (*Masih*), but like in Judaism he is not considered to be the Son of God in a literal sense.

The Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek translates all thirty-nine instances of the word *messiah* as *Christos*. The New Testament records the Greek transliteration Μεσσίας, *Messias*, twice, in John 1:41 and 4:25.

It is interesting to note that the word Messiah and Metteyya, the name of next Buddha acknowledged by Gotama Buddha could be linked phonetically. Metteyya is a Pali word spoken during the lifetime of the Buddha, denoting conqueror of enemies, whereas, Maitreya an equivalent title in Sanskrit means friendly person. Dr Fida Hassnain, the former Director of Archives, Archaeology, Research and Museums for Kashmir, wrote in his book 'The Fifth Gospel' [5] that these two words are the same as 's' in Arabic or Persian is similar to 't' in Pali. Furthermore, he quoted that there are statues of the Mahayana period, with marks on palms and feet, symbolically depict the wounds of crucifixion.

If we know the exact meaning of the word 'messiah' and how it has been changed in its interpretation with time and place, we may not necessarily have to worry about dissolving the Christian faith. The founders of the Christian faith have over emphasised atonement of our sins by Jesus' crucifixion to dramatize and propagate the faith, loosing its real objective that only Jesus knew. The Church has no doubt, succeeded in its endeavour in the past, as we have witnessed by the sheer number of Christians, but it has now started to decline for many reasons, one of which might be due to the weakness in this belief. If Jesus was a human and had survived crucifixion somehow, it could potentially loose the credibility of

[5] The Fifth Gospel. F Hassnain & D Levi 1998

Jesus as a saviour. Any evidence that contradicts Jesus' death from crucifixion could jeopardise the faith totally, which is quite worrying, and this book may try to 'Save the Saviour' by providing evidence that Jesus could be the next Buddha, a universal saviour.

If our hypothesis is true, Jesus would become the Supreme Being of all existence at one time, and would save countless numbers of souls in the future.

We just need to have faith in Jesus and in his mission to salvage mankind; no matter Christianity or any other faith, it's just a label; after all:

'A Rose by any other name smells the sweet,' the essence would be the same.

May this endeavour unite every faith and create peace on earth.

Tin Htut & Htin Paw

My Testimony

I must admit that the idea of Jesus as a possibility of a future Buddha did not occur to me before I met the missionary of the Church of Jesus Christ and the Latter-Day Saints. I was working in Cambridge at that time, back in 1993 when I came across some of the evangelists of that Church. They were knocking door to door, trying to engage in a dialog, but nobody let them in. I was empathic and let them in, although I knew that I would never accept their preaching as I am already a devout and a practising Buddhist at that time.

I must say, the Church of Jesus Christ and Latter Day Saints is the nearest Christian church to Buddhist thoughts. It is the only church that believes Jesus Christ is not the God; yet worships Him equally to the God.[6] They believe in the Bible and also in the Book of Mormon that was revealed to Joseph Smith.[7] In addition, they believe in existence prior to this life and the members practice the five precepts that include avoidance of taking alcohol and other intoxicants, unlike many other Christian denominations.

It was after a couple of years that the idea came into my mind intuitively, that Jesus might be a Bodhisatta, when I came across the similarities between Jesus' teaching and that of the Buddha in a discussion group. I was doing research at Sheffield University at that time, and it was no more than curiosity, that I have started this research casually in 1999, without any objective. I did not have any intention to publish it at all.

However, fate befell and my research contract ended in November 2000, seven years after I encountered the Church of Jesus Christ and Latter Day Saints. I found myself out of job, and had plenty of time to devote into this research while I did some

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[6] Jehovah's Witness believe that Jesus Christ is not the God, but they do not place Jesus equally to the God.
[7] The Book of Mormon

casual jobs as I did not have the General Medical Council registration to practice medicine in the UK. I had to sell off the house in order to support my daughter's education and we lived in a rented accommodation for five years. I could not get onto the property ladder again with a meagre wage that I was earning from non-academic jobs.

In 2004, I became involved in a heated discussion on the subject of Jesus' possibility as a future Buddha, and decided to do a proper research into this topic. I was collecting evidence and references on this hypothesis. When I came across the missing piece of evidence that would implicate Jesus' whereabouts during the hidden years, and his acquaintance with the Buddhist philosophy in India, I became more convinced that Jesus could be the future Buddha.

When Dan Brown's Da Vinci Code was published some Christians became very concerned about the hypothesis that Jesus was a human, and might have died naturally, which is in contradictory to their belief. Only then, I decided to publish it, not to make any material benefit, but to let the Truth out; perhaps, to 'save the saviour'! I found a sponsor and got it published in 2005.

Since after the first publication, I have encountered a few extra ordinary experiences. I must say, I have encountered a few miracles, to be more exact. I managed to go through examinations to enable me to practice medicine in this country. It might not be a miracle if it was three decades ago, when I was half my age. I did the most challenging exam at the age of sixty and went through it without a hitch, amidst working full time and preparing this book simultaneously. It appears to me that all has happened as pre-planned, as I did not have to put much effort into these challenges; no more than any other individual of a similar calibre.

The next miracle happened in Christmas 2005. I have been wishing to buy a house in London, but could not afford the

mortgage. However, I came across a shared ownership scheme in the Docklands, which is a place that I have always been dreaming of habiting. I was buying a flat that needed to be completed within a month. There were a few obstacles and it seemed that it was impossible to get it sorted out in time. I have already developed a full faith in Jesus as the future Buddha by that time and I prayed to him, asking for his help. My prayer was answered, I must say; despite all obstacles, I got it sorted out just in time, and moved into a new home on the 'Christmas Eve' of 2005.

Another miracle happened when I was working as a locum doctor in Somerset. I did a career change rather late in life, and I was trying to get into a training scheme to become a full fledge psychiatrist, but was unsuccessful, mainly because of my age. I prayed to Jesus again, asking for his help, knowing that I was wishing against all odds. The European legislation against age discrimination came into effect in the UK and, finally in November 2006, I got a career job which would enable me to practice as a psychiatrist and also gives me time to pursue my practice in meditation again, which I have stopped after the turmoil in my life events nearly six years ago.

The latest and the most striking miracle happened recently in November 2008 after my wife came down with a few cranial nerve palsies that could be potentially fatal. Her doctors could not get a definitive diagnosis due to the site of the lesions where a safe biopsy was not possible. They thought it was a relapse of her malignancy that had disabled her some fifteen years ago, and as the nature and the consequences of a possible relapse was so important that they began to decide treating her with chemotherapy without getting a definitive diagnosis, which is quite a rational approach in treating non-Hodgkin lymphoma of the brain.

However, if it was not a relapse of cancer as they thought, the consequences of getting a chemotherapy was unimaginable, and moreover, if it was to be an infection, which they could not rule it out, it would be disastrous!

I had to pray to Jesus and asked for his guidance to make a serious decision as everybody was in dilemma. I received a message that it was not cancer, but that it was related to her previous cancer. So, I acted upon it accordingly and tried to persuade my wife and the family to decide going for antibiotic treatment only, which I went against the mainstream decision of treating her with both chemotherapy and antibiotics. However, her doctors were not convinced and gave her a few doses of chemotherapy as well, which resulted in a few side effects. Then, I had to fight against everybody, including her doctors, her parents and her friends to stop chemotherapy and to give her antibiotics only, which was not an easy task, nor completely logical, but I acted upon my faith in Jesus. My proposal was finally accepted by her doctors and she responded very well to the antibiotics and has recovered miraculously.

My wife was a bit sceptical at first as we are Buddhists, but after explaining her that Jesus had made a blind man see again (she was nearly blind at that time) and had even made a dead person alive, as have been documented in his miracles, she reluctantly accepted to be treated with antibiotics only, and when she got better she started to develop faith in Jesus also.

These extra-ordinary events that I have come across in my life are enough for me to regard them as miracles, which have given me impetus to go ahead with printing the second edition as I hope I would also persuade the reader to consider my hypothesis seriously, and to believe in Jesus as not just an ordinary human being when he was on earth, even if any archaeological evidence were to confirm his mortality or his presence in India at any time.

Tin Htut, December 2008

FOREWORD TO FIRST EDITION

Jesus Christ is regarded as the Living God, a part of the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit by Christians. Similarly, the Buddha is the highest person reverend by Buddhists[8], who is no lesser than the God as defined by Christians. Despite a few differences in the definition of the two words, the Buddha and the God may be regarded as of a similar magnitude in terms of reverence, faith, and the only source for salvation although it may differ on how it would be carried out.

Christians, Jews, Muslims and almost all monotheistic faiths regard that there is only one God and that their God is the only one and genuine Creator. The Buddhists, however, have infinite number of Buddhas for they regard that there is no beginning and no end to the existence, and that Buddhas usually appear when *dhamma* (the knowledge on laws of nature or teachings of Buddha) has disappeared among humans. They regard that all living beings (including demi-gods and the God) exist in a cycle of rebirths called *samsara*[9] that has no beginning and no end. They believe that life

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[8] Buddhists are believers in Buddhism, which has two main schools. The *Theravada* school is practiced in South and South-east Asia, mainly in India, Sri Lanka (Ceylon), Myanmar (Burma), Bangladesh, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and also in the southern China. The *Mahayana* school is practiced mainly in Middle and East Asia, mainly in west, middle and northern China, Mongolia, Korea, Vietnam and Japan. The *Mahayana* or the Greater Vehicle, is a school that has deviated from the mainstream Buddhism, as it emphasizes on becoming a Buddha to liberate oneself as well as others, rather than aiming for personal liberation first to achieve *nibbana* and then to help others. It is the latter which is the prime objective of the *Theravada* Buddhism or the way of the Elders. The emergence of the *Mahayana* school coincides with the beginning of the Christian era, which arises in the first century AD, approximately 600 years after the death of the Buddha. The *Mahayana* canon is written in *Sanskrit*, an ancient language of India, whilst the *Theravada* canon is in *Pali*, which is also a phonetic ancient language of India.

[9] *Samsara* is a continuous cycle of rebirths and deaths that everybody has to encounter despite differences in faiths or beliefs. One can take rebirth in any of its 31 abodes according to one's volitional actions. The 5 abodes, viz. humans, animals, spirits (*peta*),

and existence depend upon evolution and devolution, which is the result of volitional actions and deeds called *kamma*. A *Bodhisatta* is a future Buddha in his fulfilment of perfections (*parami* in *Pali*) to become the Buddha. There have been four Buddhas in this Bhadda world-system and the next Buddha will be the *Metteyya* Buddha (*Maitreya* Buddha in Sanskrit) who would appear on earth when the teachings of the present Buddha *Gotama* disappear, and before the earth is destroyed.

When I became interested in this subject seriously in 2004, I was amazed to find the extent of literature on Jesus as the *Bodhisatta Metteyya*. Although a vast amount of literature on the *Bodhisattva Maitreya* (*Mahayana* Buddhism, the greater way) and on Jesus does exist already, this may likely be the first attempt by a follower of the *Theravada* Buddhism (The way of the elders) to explore seriously into the possibility of Jesus as a *Bodhisatta Metteyya*, the future Buddha.

I did not know of the existence of such literature and the potential significance of the interest shown by many people in this topic when I started to become interested in this assertion back in 1999. I have come across a suggestion that Jesus has used the Buddha's teachings in a book which was translated to Burmese (Myanmar). Eventually, I posted a letter in August 1999 to a discussion group on Theravada Buddhism raising the possibility that Jesus Christ could be the *Bodhisatta Metteyya* (*Bodhisattva Maitreya* in Sanskrit).[10]

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demons and some Titans/ winged angels (*asura*), and the eight types of hells are on or inside the earth; the 6 heavens of devas are celestial; and 20 realms of Brahma or gods, out of which 19 Brahma realms are in this universe. The realm of the highest Brahma who is regarded as the God is outside this universe, but it is within the 31existences. Enlightenment in Buddhist terms is to know the real truth regarding this knowledge and to escape from this cycle of life and death.

10 *Metteyya (Maitreya)* and *Ari-metteyya* are synonymous terms in *Pali* canon, means the conqueror of enemies.

Many traditionalist and fundamentalist Buddhists opposed my views, and during the year 2004, when I responded to a discussion at "Triple Gem - yahoo group", I was even branded as a *micchadhiti*, a person who holds a false view, or perhaps roughly translatable as an apostate or a heretic.

I have expected much opposition from the fundamentalists when I made the assertion since the idea of Jesus as our most reverend and adored *Bodhisatta Metteyya* could be preposterous, but was surprised by the label of blasphemy when I am actively practicing Buddhism, and have made many sacrifices concerning my faith.

I was born in a Buddhist family, but I shun myself from the religion since childhood. It was mainly because of coming across malpractice in a few young monks. I was then, called a communist by the Chief Abbot due to my attitudes towards the *samgha* (Community of monks). Later on, when I studied science and medicine, I became more sceptical about life after death, and as a result, I became a humanist rather than a Buddhist.

I have been a practicing Buddhist for fourteen odd years now, although I must admit that I have kept myself away from the faith for many years previously. My interest in Buddhism has only emerged when I encountered unexpectedly a case of rebirth in my close relative, and since then I studied Buddhism enthusiastically.

Although I become an aspiring and a practicing Buddhist, I was sympathetic to Jesus when I read his life story. I also admired the missionary work of many people who have undertaken much inconvenience and trouble in proselytizing their faith. I could not find a parallel enthusiasm in many Buddhists, who would not mind giving *dhana* (charity), but would not consider taking such trouble to propagate the religion. I was criticized even by my wife for being too sympathetic and inviting to Christianity, when I let the Missionary people into my home in their attempt to propagate their faith on the Jesus Christ and Latter Day Saints Church. I have, however, told

them in advance that I am a Buddhist and would never become a Christian before I let them in to be fair and honest. That is my only direct relationship with Christianity.

I have never been a Christian and my research into this subject is out of mere interest. After I came across the evidence, I must admit that my attitude towards Jesus has changed. I may now be labelled a Jesuit as I have faith in his pursuit. However, I am still a pure *Theravada* Buddhist, practicing *vipassana* to be liberated from the *samsara*, and if possible, I would consider immediate enlightenment rather than making an aspiration to meet the Buddha *Metteyya* at an adjourned date to learn 'The Truth'. I would rather have it in this *Gotama* dispensation, if I have the ability and the opportunity to do so, rather than waiting for a few million years for *Metteyya* or Jesus to show me the way.

Nevertheless, I have great admiration and devotion for both *Metteyya* and Jesus if they were to be different persons. I adore them both for their aspiration and effort in fulfilling the perfections to achieve their goal. I do not worship either *Metteyya* or Jesus for salvation, although I must admit that I disperse my *Metta* and pay respect and homage to both of them; and that I have a portrait of Jesus at 'The Last Supper' in my living room which was given to me by the twin sisters I met at a nursing home, Flo and Elsie, before they passed away.

This research is of no value to enlightenment directly, but it may perhaps help a few to become interested in both *Metteyya* and Jesus. If it has somehow aided anyone to develop their faith in the future Buddha, either be *Metteyya*, Jesus, or both, it has served its purpose.

I also wish sincerely that Christians would understand the implications of this research if they really loved Jesus, and to bear with me while I put forward the evidence. I have no intentions to neither go against the Church nor try to convert anyone, but sharing what I have gathered through this research. However, should it

annoy anyone by any means or has disturbed them in their faith, my sincere apologies for the inconvenience caused by this Testament.

This research has its roots in 1999 or even earlier, but most of it has been compiled in 2004. It is not intended to be published before till the Da Vinci Code (Dan Brown) came out, which has created many concerns among devout Christians, as it appears that Jesus was a human. It may have downplayed the role of Jesus as if he was a human in the eyes of Christians, but it strengthens the hypothesis that we are trying to prove. I have tried to upgrade the role Jesus by this research, which was not my original intention, I must admit. As a research scholar, I must put forward any observation without bias or prejudice.

This book has two parts. **Part I** deals with research into which Jesus is, looking the possibility of him being the future Buddha and comparative study of Christianity and Buddhism. **Part II** covers the scientific outlook into the Buddhist philosophy and practice, some of which are the author's personal views and may be controversial.

The research contains quotations from published articles, books, several websites and from correspondence in discussion groups and the reader may skip any part if it is too academic. I have listed the names of those who have helped in the preparation of this book in the acknowledgements. However, I need to express my special thanks to a few persons here.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Ah Ko Gyi (elder brother) U Htin Paw who lives in United States, for his endless and tireless support, and for the references that he has provided. He is indeed my brother of the same lineage, as I might not have compiled this article if we did not meet since we were miles apart and have never come across each other before. It is by fate that we met and we have jointly compiled this article as a gift of *Dhamma-Dana* to support our lineage of the past. He is definitely worth a co-authorship of this compilation, without whose help I

would never have accomplished this task amidst my struggle in getting back into the academic career.

My thanks are also due to Venerable Dr. Uttaranyana, the Chief Abbott of the Birmingham Buddhist Vihara, who has given me the lead to the evidence, to Venerable Dr Dhammasami of the Oxford Buddhist Vihara, for helping me with the canonical support, and to Venerable Ashin Kumara (Sitagu) of the University of Delhi for his tireless effort in editing the Pali terms.

With Metta,
Tin Htut
October 2005

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PART ONE

Who Is Jesus?

A Research into the Possibility of

Jesus as Metteyya, the Future Buddha

Chapter 1:

Background

The historical Jesus has been a mystery for many; Orthodox Church states that he is part of the Holy Trinity, a Saviour that takes the sins of humans when he died of crucifixion, and will come back to save the world; researchers think he was a human who preached peculiar facts similar to Buddhism; and some even thought he might have survived the crucifixion and escaped to India. We study who Jesus really is, comparing the contents of the Bible with the Gnostic Gospels that are destroyed during the early years of Christianity, and the information available in both the Theravada and Mahayana texts.

Buddhism is the teaching of the present Gotama Buddha who appeared on earth approximately 500 years before Jesus, and His teaching is believed to survive 5000 years after His death. Buddhism would disappear among humans after that period and would remain so until the next Buddha appears on earth who will teach the Dhamma, to liberate humans from the suffering. The next Buddha will be known as *Metteyya* in Pali or *Maitreya* in Sanskrit.

The Real *Metteyya,* in whose image?

The future Buddha has been predicted by the present Buddha in one of His discourses as *Metteyya,* who would use Metta Bhavana, or loving kindness and compassion, as the vehicle of his enlightenment. He is now known to the Buddhists to be residing in the Tusita Heaven awaiting his time to be reborn as a human in his last existence as the Buddha. There is abundant information on the future Buddha, but nobody knows for certain who this historical person was, especially after the Buddha Gotama's period in the Buddhagossa recorded modern history, and a few likely candidates including Buddhagossa himself, who wrote the Visuddhimagga, the

path of purity and Pu Tai, the laughing Buddha were reviewed along with the historical Jesus.

Who is Buddha?

A Buddha is an extraordinary human being who has fulfilled ten perfections[11] during his uncountable previous lives, which include existence as a Brahma God, *deva* or demi-god, human, animal, and all the 31 existences of the *samsara* except Arupaloka and Brahma realm of the enlightened ones, after he has made the resolution to become a Buddha. He does not stay to its full lifespan in any Brahma or Deva realms which have very long lifespan if he needs to fulfil the ten perfections. In his last existence he becomes enlightened on the four Noble Truth by himself, namely (1) ***Dukkha-sacca***, the reality of suffering or un-satisfaction originated from impermanence of every composed living or non-living object, and furthermore, this reality becomes more evident when one comes to know the absence of an eternal spirit or soul; (2) ***Samudaya-sacca***, the truth regarding the cause of this un-satisfaction; (3) ***Nirodha-sacca***, the perfect end of all unsatisfactory things, both physically and mentally; and (4) ***Magga-sacca***, the unique path or the method to obtain a supra-mundane bliss or the ultimate relief of all forms of suffering.

The Buddhist canon states that there were indefinite numbers of Buddhas in the past since it is believed that there is no beginning. In this world system there have been four Buddhas, and the last Buddha that appeared over 2500 years ago was the Gotama Buddha. It is well documented that there will be another Buddha in this auspicious aeon before the closure of this *Bhadda*

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[11] The ten perfections are: Generosity, giving (*dana*), Morality (*sila*), Renunciation (*nekkhamma*), Wisdom (*panna*), Energy (*viriya*), Patience (*khanti*), Truthfulness (*sacca*), Determination (*adhitthana*), Loving-kindness (*metta*), Equanimity (*upekkha*). Perfections (Parami) by Sayadaw U Thittila<mmu-dsg.tripod.com/perfection.htm> Ref.1

kappa (the present world system) where a total of five Buddhas would appear. The last Buddha will appear after the disappearance of the present Buddha *Gotama*'s dispensation, which is known as Sasana[12] in Pali.

Are Bodhisatta, Buddha and God the same?

A *Bodhisatta* (in *Pali*) is an extraordinary person who has an aspiration to attain the highest knowledge and the title of Buddha. He would do anything to achieve his objective, even if he had to sacrifice his own life, and is always willing to help others for (self) salvation. In theory, everyone can become a *Bodhisatta* , a future Buddha, who is perfect in everyway and has an immense love, empathy and sympathy towards everybody without any discrimination or setting any condition or boundary; and saves everybody from the endless suffering in *samsara* should a person have the faith in Him and opted to follow His instructions. In this sense, a Buddha is a perfect God if one should imagine God as the Supreme Being of all who could salvage us; from all suffering including the delusions of creation and eternal soul-beliefs.

A *Bodhisatta* will have to fulfil the ten perfections after making a resolution to become a Buddha. In practice, only a very few can really become a Buddha as it takes enormous amount of effort, sacrifice, and energy to fulfil these perfections which would take an infinite period of time in terms of earth years that we know of. The last *Gotama* Buddha took four *asankhyeya* (incalculable time) and ten thousand *kappas* (world systems) to achieve this goal, much

[12] *Sasana* is the dispensation of the teachings of Buddha, which is also known as the *dhamma*. The *sasana* of the present *Buddha Gotama* in this *Bhadda Kappa* will last 5000 years after the death of *Gotama*. Some also suggested that the *sasana* was compromised by the acceptance of female bhikkus or monks into the Order when the Buddha was asked to accept his stepmother into the Order, which he could not refuse. Its dominancy in this world was shortened to 500 years by this compromise, which coincided with Jesus appearance and the birth of Christianity. After the total disappearance of the *sasana* among humans, another Buddha will appear on this earth to discover the *dhamma* after a period of quiescence in *dhamma* teaching.

higher than the lifespan of God, according to the Buddhist literature. A *kappa* could be as long as many billion-earth years, and one can imagine the immense amount of time that would be involved.

Likewise, an ordinary person will have to fulfil perfections and purify oneself under the instructions of a Buddha's teachings for salvation from the *samsara*. It involves endeavour and practice under the guidance, and is not just a gift for having the faith, as most believed, although there is a possibility of attaining immediate enlightenment after listening to a discourse of a live Buddha. This sort of salvation can only occur when someone has attained enough *parami* or perfection. However, it is relatively easy to reborn in heaven in association with god (s) when someone develops faith and listens to a discourse of a live Buddha, which one may call en masse salvation.

Dhamma is universal and is always present, just as any other physical laws, but the knowledge of *dhamma* is lost in the absence of the dispensation of Buddhism. The Buddha is like a scientist who discovers these laws and teaches mankind and all beings the implications, and the way to void these laws as they are the sources of impermanence and suffering.

The Buddhist Philosophy

Samsara

According to the Buddhist philosophy, there is no known beginning and no known end. Although modern cosmology postulates that the Big Bang about 15 billion (that is 15,000 million) years ago might be the beginning (Cosmos by Carl Sagan). Buddhism sees further than the Big Bang and states that the so called Big Bangs and the subsequent evolution of universes after a latent period is a cyclical process of beginnings and ends that goes on forever, without a beginning and without an end (of life or soul). This cyclical process is known as the *Samsara*.

Kamma

Every living thing is subjected to the process of evolution and devolution, which is conditioned by the intentional actions that one has performed during the process. The intentional (volitional) action is called a *kamma*, which can either be of a good or a bad quality and will have an equal resultant, which is called a *vipaka*. It is like a physical law; every action has an equal and opposite reaction, but the results of one's own action may take affect immediately or may be latent until opportunity arises to become effective. Some *kamma* can become temporarily ineffective when the opposing *kamma* is stronger, but will take affect as soon as the conditions are ripe. Some minor *kamma* can be nullified totally when one has reached a noble status, but heavy or strong *kamma* will take affect despite any condition of the subject.

Likewise, a good Kamma will give a good result. If someone has performed a multitude of excellent *kamma* like the ten great perfections, a good effect will certainly yield one day no matter who he/she is, or what he/she believes. One does not have to be a Buddhist or even a human, to be affected by these physical laws. They are universal and equally applicable to every living object.

The Assertion

If one has made a resolution to become a Buddha and has fulfilled the perfections, a person will become a Buddha by any means, no matter how long it will take. This law is not limited only to the Buddhists; it is a universal process that applies to everybody. There is no double standard in this process.

Jesus was an extraordinary person with a passion for becoming a messiah or a saviour and with compassion to save mankind. The idea of Jesus as a possible *bodhisatta* and particularly the coming Buddha (*Metteyya*) may arise originally, from Mahayana that has identified the similarities of his teaching with that of the Buddha.

The similarity could not be explained rationally and could not be a coincidence either, because of its sheer size. It is possible that the

information on *dhamma* could have gathered during the untold life history of Jesus between his 13 to 30 years. An explanation on this hidden period is described in Christianity, but a few researchers have found evidence that might explain this mystery more logically.

Notovitch and Swami had independently discovered very old manuscripts in *Hemis* monastery in Ladakh, India, that unfold the hidden life history of Jesus.[13]

In the Myanmar (Burmese) translation[14], Jesus was said to have travelled to India with a caravan of traders in his quest for knowledge, as he was trying to find why God created people unequally when He was supposed to love all His children in equal. Jesus found some of the answers from the traders he met during a short acquaintance in Jerusalem, and having wanted to learn more on the subject, he went with them to India and Tibet. He was said to have made the immediate decision to go along with the caravan of traders who were about to leave, and he had not even let anyone know of his whereabouts during this long period of absence. Jesus was said to have learned *Pali* and Sanskrit, read the Vedas and the Buddhist Canon, and then returned through Persia to Palestine to preach the gospel. In the above mentioned Burmese translation, it stated that Jesus was trained under a Tibetan Lama, who taught him the Buddhist philosophy and *samatha* meditation, after great persuasion and a long apprenticeship. When he decided to go back to his own people to espouse and teach what he had learnt,

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[13] The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ, Nicholas Notovtich 1894; Dragon Key Press 2005; ISBN 0-9761704-4-2; translated from French by J.H.Connelly & L.Lendsberg ISBN 1-884956-41-6 (Ref. 2) and The Life of Saint Issa, French translation by Notovitch. ***http://www.reluctant-messenger.com/main.htm***

[14] "Questions & Answers on Buddhism", by Ashin Ariya Dhamma, a publication in Myanmar (Burmese), translated by U Ko Gyi from English (Ref.3)
Abstracts of a symposium on multi-faiths in India; chaired & edited by Dr BR Ambedkar (1891-1956), Barrister-at-Law, born in India as a low caste Hindu, who became one of the most outstanding political and religious leaders of India, and published many books including "Castes in India", and "The Problem of the Rupee". He led millions of low caste Hindus to convert into Buddhists.

permission was said to be refused by his teacher many times. Eventually Jesus was allowed to go back, only after it was revealed that he would face certain death if he did so. He went back on his own accord, despite this warning and prediction, which could indicate Jesus' determination to fulfil his mission at the cost of his life.

This fact, together with the similarities of his teaching to that of the Buddha, leads to the assertion that Jesus might be the future Bodhisatta Metteyya. The assertion is even made stronger if one looks at Jesus' teaching, which is contradictory to the Old Testament. '*An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth*' - a well known instruction in the Old Testament, which is also known as the "Mosaic Law" is a straight forward contradiction to Jesus' advice to have patience and *Metta* (loving-kindness) towards everybody; even to one's own enemies, and to those who had wronged oneself. This is best illustrated by Jesus' words when he exhorted his followers to 'Turn the other cheek when someone slaps you.'

Also, the essence of Kamma and *vipaka* is portrayed by Jesus' words - '*You reap what you sow*' is again in contrast to the teaching of Old Testament: '*Everything is according to the will of the Almighty God*'. These are just a few examples and will be found more when it reaches to the Chapter on the comparison of Jesus' teaching to that of the Buddha. Christianity in its embryonic stage might have mingled Jesus' new teachings to create the "New Testament" - a religion that has new aspirations. These new teachings had to take into account though, the same principle of the creator God which is acceptable to most people in those days.

The Prediction

Jesus has certainly proclaimed that he would be coming back to save mankind before the end of the world, which in principle, is similar to the prediction of the appearance of Buddha *Metteyya*, who would use the *metta bhavana* (cultivation of loving- kindness)

for his enlightenment, which is also another peculiar coincidence with Jesus' doctrine on non-violence, patience and compassion.

Science has postulated the end of the world as the "Sun-death", but the prophecy of the Buddha sounds more like a "Contraction of the universe" where solar systems become close to one another and the subsequent appearance of two to seven suns that will destroy the world and its inhabitants *(Anguttara Nikaya VII.62)*. Melford Spiro in his book 'Buddhism and Society' stated that the *Bhadda Kappa* is longer than earth's life or a solar system (i.e. it would take place even later than the postulated modern astrology of the "Sun-death" of the world and the solar system). The description in the *Anguttara Nikaya* appears to be referring to the 'universe' than to the 'solar system'. It states that all the so called 31 abodes in the universe would be destroyed in the catastrophe, except the highest abode of the *Maha Brahma*, which would be spared as it situates beyond the universe.[15]

The *Bhadda kappa* may end sooner when the suns dies than the end of the universe as described in the scriptures. It has mentioned that humans (life) will survive many catastrophes including the Big Bang and will continue to live forever, but the quality of life will be in ups and downs depending upon the volitional actions performed by each individual. Years before the closure of the *Bhadda kappa,* the *Bodhisatta Metteyya* will appear and will save mankind from the suffering. After the appearance of the *Metteyya* Buddha, there will be no more Buddhas in this *Bhadda kappa.* The earth may not be immediately destroyed after the last Buddha's appearance, and people will enjoy their full lives in harmony due to the Buddha's teachings and may go on until its last days before the sun has exhausted.

The *Bhadda kappa* or perhaps the universe will only be destroyed completely including all the heavenly abodes of *devas*,

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[15] *Buddhism:The Mahayana* by Edward Conze; The Hutchinson Encyclopaedia of Living Faiths; Ed. RC Zaehner; Helicon Pub, Oxford OX1 2EP. Ref.4

when the seven suns appear as mentioned in the *Anguttara Nikaya*. In the meantime, the majority of humans and *devas* will be reborn in higher abodes due to their *kusala kamma.* According to the scriptures, a *deva* will be reminding all beings to be righteous and keep precepts as the universe approaches its end. Those who are not liberated from the *samsara,* despite the Buddha's teachings, but have kept the precepts and did *samatha* meditation,[16] would be reborn in the *Maha Brahma*s realm, prior to the end when all the 30 abodes will be annihilated. Those who will have to take rebirth in hell due to their heavy *akusala kamma* would also have to move to the hells in other universes, as all the hells in the *Bhadda Kappa* would also be destroyed in the catastrophe.

When the universe has cooled down after its destruction and after a latent period of transition, life will appear again in a new universe, where organic life forms will evolve. When that time comes, some of those who are in the highest realm of the *Maha Brahma* for a definite period will die and take rebirth as humans again and the cycle of rebirths[17] and deaths will continue.

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[16] *Samatha* meditation (concentration practice) focuses the mind on a single object and builds the concentration to obtain *jhanas* and psychic powers, the highest of which (8th *jahana*) can give rebirth to the highest form of Brahmas or the Gods. vipassana or the insight meditation starts with contemplation of the mind on one object, but it soon focuses the mind on any object that prevails in the mind and try to develop insight into the three characteristics, viz. impermanence (*anicca*), suffering or unsatisfactory (*dukkha*), and selflessness (*anatta*).

[17] *Rebirth* in Buddhist philosophy can occur in three different modes; womb born and egg born as in animal kingdom, and instantaneous birth without having to undergo conception and embryonic development (*opapātika*) can occur in spirits (*peta*), demons and fallen angels (*asura*), hell beings (*niraya*), winged-angels and demi-gods (*deva*), and Gods *(brahma*) who have non-organic or physical body but have a fine body that cannot be touched. They can pass through any solid barrier can live in space, subterranean and in the ocean. They can be travel instantaneously to any place depending upon the power they achieved. Each type has a different appearance and different body odour, and higher beings can create a physical body if they chose to be seen.

The Buddha *Gotama* said that this cycle has been going on forever indefinitely; that there is no beginning and no end; and that the *Maha Brahma* has witnessed a few such cycles and considered Himself to be eternal. However, Buddha *Gotama* said he would definitely die when his good *Kamma* exhausted and would return to this cyclical process at a certain time. The essence of Buddhism is to be liberated from the *sansara* and to be free of all suffering. If there is life, there will be death. Therefore, Buddhism sees further than all faiths, and aims to reach the perfection (*nibbana/nirvana*), that is beyond life and death.

Comparative Study on Christianity and Buddhism

A Review on the Points Leading to the Research

The similarities between the teachings of Jesus and the Buddha

There is compelling evidence that Jesus had learnt Buddhism in one way or the other. The basic teachings of Jesus are to have *metta* (loving-kindness) towards everybody; *karuna* (compassion) as portrayed by his words '*We ought to love each other as God loves us; we must do good not only to friends and family, not only to fellow believers but also to those who are wrong and hurt us*.' In the Sermon on the Mount, he preaches as follows: 'You have heard that it was said - *Love your neighbour and hate your enemy (*Mosaic Law*)*. But I tell you: *Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*' (Matthew 5-7; *New International Version*; *Gospel.com.net*; *BibleGateway.com*) [18]

Jesus also teaches his followers to have patience (*khanti*) and forgiveness by his sermons - '*turn the other cheek'* '*go the extra mile*' which is in contrast with the Mosaic Law of the Old Testament which clearly encourages to retaliate and to take revenge, as can be seen in the message, '*eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth'*.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said "You have heard that it was said, '*Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth*.' But I tell you - '*Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take*

[18] Matthew, New International Version Ref.5; [*Gospelcom.net & www.BibleGateway. com*]

your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you." (Matthew 5-7; *New International Version NIV*)

Jesus also gave parables, which clearly demonstrated the idea of *kamma* and *vipaka* by '*you reap what you sow*' stories. The Church, however, expressed those words differently to suit its purpose. A parable from the Gospels, the teachings or the revelations of Christ, has a similarity to that of the Buddha's teachings. "People hear my words: *a farmer goes to sow his fields. The birds come and eat the seeds. Other seed falls on the path. And behold, some seed falls on the rock where there is no earth, and withers away. Some falls under the thorns and cannot grow. The seed that falls on good earth, however, sprouts and brings forth fruit.* The farmer is Jesus and the seeds are his words of wisdom. The seeds, which are eaten by the birds, means - people who do not understand the words. The seeds that fall onto the rocks are the words of wisdom that goes in one ear and come out of the other. The seeds that land under the thorns mean those who hear and see, but do not act accordingly. The seeds, which land on the good earth, mean those that hear the words of wisdom and act accordingly. (Matthew 13, 1-23; Mark 4, 1-20; Luke 8, 4-15)[19]

Jesus encourages people by his words to have righteousness (*sila*) and not to react or judge others - '*Judge not un-righteously, that ye be not judged; but judge righteous judgment*' (Matthew 7:1, 2 *Inspired Version*)

Jesus teaches people on a moral aspect that is a direct word from the Buddhist canon; "Do to others as you would like others done to you." It is part of the four Sangaha objects that come from Diga Nikaya, Sila Khanda Vigga Athakatha where *dhana*, charity; *piyavasa* soft and gentle speech; *atha cariya*,

[19] Matthew, New International Version, *op cit*

doing for others' welfare; and *samanata*, do to others as you would like others done to you are mentioned.

Jesus also teaches how one can give alms in righteousness (*dhana*), '*Be careful not to do your acts of righteousness before men, to be seen by them, if you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogue and on the streets, to be honoured by men*. I tell you the truth; *they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand knows, what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be a secret*.' (The Sermon on the Mount, *New International Version NIV*, Matthew 6) (Matthew 6:1-4)[20]

Jesus also teaches how to meditate/*bhavana* and how does one pray in secret - '*go where you can be alone, go where you can think, go where you can kneel, go where you can speak out loud to him and picture him in your mind's eye.'* (Matthew 6)

Jesus has preached perfection rather than direct salvation by the God - '*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect*' (Matthew 5:48). The perfection is in steps and Jesus has given them eight distinct ways by which his followers might receive joy, which was given in the Sermon on the Mount. A commentary of the sermon made by Elder Harold B. Lee said: "Christ came not only into the world to make an atonement for the sins of mankind, but to set an example before the world of the standard of perfection of God's law and of obedience to the Father. In his Sermon on the Mount, the Master has given us somewhat of a revelation of his own character, which was perfect, or what might be said to be an autobiography, every syllable of which he had

[20] The Sermon on the Mount, *New International Version NIV*, Matthew 6 Ref.6 (http://www.rejesus.com)

written down in deeds,' and in so doing has given us a blueprint for our own lives."[21]

The resemblance of Jesus' teachings to those of the Buddha Gotama, as put forward by scholars

There are many scholars who have come across this peculiar resemblance of Jesus' teachings to that of the Buddha *Gotama.* It is hard to say that this is just a coincidence.

Here are some of the quotations. There is an unequivocal consensus on the date of *Gotama* Buddha's teachings, which are about 500 years earlier. If there were any resemblance between Jesus' teachings to that of the Buddha, the information would have come from the Buddhists, which Jesus could have gathered somehow.

"There is every reason to believe that the *Pitakas* [sacred books containing the legends and the teaching of *Gotama* Buddha] now present in Sri Lanka (Ceylon) are substantially identical with the books of the Southern Canon (Theravada Buddhist Text), as settled at the Council of Patna about the year 250 B.C. As no works would have been received into the Canon which were not then believed to be very old, the *Pitakas* may be approximately placed in the fourth century B.C., and parts of them possibly reach back very nearly, if not quite, to the time of *Gotama* (Buddha) himself."[22]

"We know that the Fo-pen-hing [legends of Buddha] was translated into Chinese from Sanskrit as early as the eleventh year of the reign of - Wing-ping (Ming-ti) of the Hans Dynasty, i.e., 69 or

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[21] *Decisions for Successful Living*, pp. 55-56; 8 page 57; *The Church of Jesus Christ and the Latter Day Saints.* Ref.7

[22] T.W. Rhys Davids, 19th-Century Professor, *Buddhism: Being a Sketch of the Life and Teachings of Gotama, the Buddha*, London, 1894, p. 10 .Ref.8

70 A.D. We may, therefore, safely suppose that the original work was in circulation in India for some time before this date."[23]

"These points of agreement with the Gospel narrative arouse curiosity and require explanation. If we could prove that they [the legends of Buddha] were unknown in the East for some centuries after Christ, the explanation would be easy. But all the evidence we have gone to prove the contrary...." *(Ibid.pp.viii-ix.)* "With the remarkable exception of the death of Jesus on the cross, and of the doctrine of atonement by vicarious suffering, which is absolutely excluded by Buddhism, the most ancient of the Buddhist records known to us contain statements about the life and the doctrines of *Gotama* Buddha, which correspond in a remarkable manner, by mere chance, with the traditions recorded in the Gospels about the life and doctrines of Jesus Christ...."[24]

"Between the language of The Buddha and his disciples, and the language of Christ and his apostles, there are strange coincidences. Even some Buddhist legends and parables sound as if taken from the New Testament, though we know that many of them existed before the beginning of the Christian era."[25]

"Approximately five centuries older than Christianity, by the time of the birth of Christ, Buddhism had already spread through much of India and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and had penetrated into Central Asia and China."[26]

"The miraculous birth of Buddha, his life and instructions, contain a great number of the moral and dogmatic truths professed in Christianity."[27]

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[23] Beal S. *The Romantic Legends of Sakya Buddha from the Chinese Sanskrit*, London, 1875, p. vi. Ref.9
[24] de Bunsen, Ernest C.L., *The Angel Messiah of Buddhists, Essenes and Christians*, London, 1880, p. 50. Ref.10
[25] Muller, F. Max, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, London, 1873, p. 243. Ref.11
[26] Latourette, Kenneth Scott, *A History of Christianity*, New York, 1975, p. 274. Ref.12
[27] Huc ML'Abbe, *Christianity in China, Tartary, and Thibet,* London, 1857, p.327. Ref.13

'...nothing now remains for the honest man to do but acknowledge the truth, which is that the history of Jesus of Nazareth as related in the books of the New Testament, is simply a copy of that of Buddha, with a mixture of mythology borrowed from other nations.'[28]

Similarities in the quality of a Bodhisatta and Jesus[29]

1. Both have shown their wisdom at a very tender age. *Siddhattha* has practiced *samatha bhavana*[7b] at the Ploughing Ceremony and has attained *jhanas* when he was very young. Jesus went to the Temple at the age of twelve, where he has said to astonish all with his wisdom. *(Ibid., p. 37; Luke 2:41--48.)*
2. Both supposedly fasted in solitude for a long time. Buddha has practiced austere asceticism (*dukkaracariya*) for six years, and has also been fasting for forty-nine days, prior to enlightenment. Jesus fasted for forty days and forty nights before he started to perform miracles.[30]
3. Both have gone forth at a young age. "When he [Buddha] went again to the garden, he saw a monk who was calm, tranquil, self-possessed, serene, and dignified. The prince, determined to become such a monk, was led to make the great renunciation. At the time he was twenty--nine years of age...."[31] "Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age" *(Luke 3:23).*
4. Both were tempted by the "devil or *Mara*" at the conclusion of their fasts and when they were about to

[28] T.W. Doane, *Bible Myths*, New York, 1882, p. 286. Ref.14
[29] http://www. Warren [*Posted by Stoic on Tuesday, 25 January 2000, at 1:00 p.m., in response to Buddha vs. Jesus, posted by Warren on Tuesday, 25 January 2000 and as put forward by scholars and edited to agree with the Theravada tradition*] Ref.15
[30] Arthur Lillie, *Buddha and Early Buddhism*, London, 1881, p. 100, Matthew 4:2. Ref.16
[31] *Encyclopaedia Americana*, New York, Rand McNally and Co., 1963, vol. 4, p. 672. Ref.17

achieve nobility (enlightenment). To *Siddhattha* Buddha, *Mara* said: "*Go not forth to adopt a religious life but return to your kingdom, and in seven days you shall become emperor of the world, riding over the four continents.*"[32] Jesus, the devil said: "*All these [kingdoms of the world] I will give you, if you fall down and worship me*." *(*Matthew *4:9).*

5. Both have resisted the temptation. Buddha answered the devil: "*Get you away from me*." *(de Bunsen, p.38)* Jesus responded: "*….begone, Satan!*" *(*Matthew*4:10).*

6. Both experienced the "supernatural events" after the "devil" left. For Buddha: "*The skies rained flowers, and delicious odours prevailed [in] the air.*" *(Ibid)* For Jesus: "*angels came and ministered to him*." *(*Matthew *4:11).* The multitudes required a sign from both in order that they might believe.*(Muller, Science, p. 27;* Matthew*16:1)*

7. Both were male humans striving to save mankind and gods. Jesus aims to salvage mankind and to establish a kingdom of heaven on earth. *(*Matthew *4:17)* Buddha "represented himself as a mere link in a long chain of enlightened human teachers." *(Muller, Science, p. 140.)*

8. Both were ready to sacrifice their lives and body parts to fulfil the perfections. According to the Buddha*vamsa*, the Buddha was an ape in one of his earlier existences. He sacrificed his life even when he knew that the Brahmin he had saved had attempted to kill him by crushing his head with a stone. Jesus said: "*If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out, and throw it away*." *(*Matthew *5:29).* He sacrificed his life on the cross without loosing patience and compassion towards his offenders.

[32] Moncure D. Conway, *The Sacred Anthology,* London, 1874, p. 173. Ref.18

9. Buddha taught that the motive of all our actions should be loving kindness and compassion on our neighbours. *(Ibid., p. 249)* Jesus taught: "...love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" *(*Matthew *5:44).*

10. Buddha said: "Hide your good deeds, and confess before the world the sins you have committed." (to be humble) *(Ibid., p.28)* Jesus said: "Beware of practicing your piety before men to be seen by them;" *(*Matthew *6:1)* and "Therefore confess your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that you may be healed..." *(James 5:16).*

11. Both are said to have known the thoughts of others. "By directing his mind to the thoughts of others, [Buddha] can know the thoughts of all beings."[33] But, Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said: "Why do you think evil in your hearts?" *(*Matthew*9:4).*

12. Both were itinerant preachers with a close group of trustees within a larger group of disciples.[34] (Matthew *26:20.)*

13. Both demanded that their disciples renounce all worldly possessions.[35] The number of the disciples rapidly increased, and *Gotama* sent forth his monks on missionary tours hither and thither, bidding them wander everywhere, preaching the doctrine, and teaching men to order their lives with self--restraint, simplicity, and charity. *(Hastings, op sit)* And, [Jesus] called to him the twelve [apostles], and began to send them out two by two. So, they went out and preached that men should repent. *(Mark 6:7, 12).*

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[33] R. Spence Hardy, *The Legends and Theories of the Buddhists Compared with History and Science,* London, 1866, p. 181 . Ref.19

[34] James Hastings, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, New York: Edinburgh T. & T. Clark, 1918, vol. 6, p. 883. Ref.20

[35] Hardy, *Monarchism*, p. 6; Luke 14:33. Ref.21

14. Both had a disciple who could walk on water, to shoe the power and to convert sceptical villagers, Buddha showed them his disciple walking across a river without sinking. *(Lillie, p. 140)* Jesus said: '...Come.' And, so, Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus, but when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink, he cried out: `Lord, save me!' *(*Matthew *14:29--30).*

15. Both have views on equality and discourage discrimination. "One day *Ananda*, the disciple of Buddha, after a long walk in the country, meets with *Matangi*, a woman of the low caste of the *Kandalas* near a well, and asks her for some water. She tells him what she is and that she must not come near him. But he replies: `my sister, I ask not for your caste or your family, I ask only for a sip of water. She afterwards became a disciple of Buddha." *(Muller, Science, p. 243)* "There came a woman of *Samaria* to draw water. Jesus said to her: 'Give me a drink' The Samaritan woman said to him: "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" *(John 4:7--9).*

16. Each repeated a question three times to ensure right perception. "The Buddha next addressed the *Bhikkhu* and requested them three times to ask him if they had any doubt or question that they wished clarified, but they all remained silent."[36] [Jesus] said to him the third time: `Simon, son of John, do you love me?' Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time: "Do you love me?" *(John 21:17).*

17. Both received similar receptions from disciples. "The people swept the pathway, the gods strewed flowers on

[36] *Encyclopaedia Britannica, New York: William and Helen Benton, 1974, vol. 2, p. 373.* Ref.22

the pathway and branches of the coral tree, the men bore branches of all manner of trees, and the *Bodhisatta Sumedha* spread his garments in the mire, [and] men and gods shouted: `All hail.“*(Hardy, Legends, p.134)* “And they brought the colt to Jesus, and threw their garments on it; and he sat on it. And many spread their garments on the road, and others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields” *(Mark 11:7--8).*

18. Both had an archrival. “[Buddha’s] chief rival was *Devadatta*, a cousin of the Buddha, who is represented as being jealous of his influence and popularity and as repeatedly seeking to compass his death.” *(Hastings, op sit)* “While [Jesus] was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying: `The one I shall kiss is the man; seize him!’ And he came up to Jesus at once, and said: `Hail, Master!’ And he kissed him” *(*Matthew *26:47--49).*

19. Before their death, both have reminded their disciples to remember what they have taught. Buddha said to his disciple: “*Ananda*, when I am gone, you must not think there is no Buddha; the discourses I have delivered, and the precepts I have enjoined, must be my successors, or representatives, and be to you as Buddha.”[37] Before his “ascension,” Jesus said to his disciples: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age” *(Matthew 28:19-20).*

20. Extraordinary events occurred at death in both. When Buddha died the earth shook; “The coverings of [his] body unrolled themselves, and the lid of his coffin was opened

[37] Hardy, *Eastern Monarchism* (London, 1860), p. 230. Ref.23

by supernatural powers." *(de Bunsen, p. 49.)* When Jesus died: "And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone, and sat upon it" *(*Matthew *28:2).*

More Similarities between Buddha and Jesus

Posted by Warren on Tuesday, 25 January 2000

1. Buddha and Jesus all claimed to be of royal descent: "The ancestry of *Gotama* Buddha is traced from his father, *Suddhodana*, through various individuals and races, all of royal dignity, to *Maha-sammata*, the first monarch of the world...." *(Doane, p. 291.)* Jesus' genealogy consists mostly of kings (Matthew 1:6--16), and he is traced back to Adam, the first man *(Luke 3:38).*
2. Both were declared divine at birth: An ascetic proclaimed *Siddhattha* divine at the royal court.[38] Matthew records that wise men proclaimed the infant Jesus divine. *(*Matthew *2:1, 11).*
3. "Celestial bodies" announced both men's births. *(De Bunsen, pp. 22--23, 33;* Matthew *2:2.)*
4. When each was born, 'angels' sang in heaven. For Buddha, they sang: "Today, *Bodhisatta* is born on earth, to give joy and peace to men and devas [angels], to shed light on the dark places, and to give sight to the blind." *(Beal, p. 56)* For Jesus, they sang: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill among men" *(Luke 2:14).*

[38] Godfred Higgins, *Anacalypsis: An Enquiry into the Origin of Languages, Nations and Religions,* (London, 1836) vol. 1, p. 157. Ref.24

5. Upon their births, they were supposedly presented with gifts. Buddha received gold, frankincense, and myrrh.[39]*(& de Bunsen, p.36)* Jesus received costly jewels and precious substances *(*Matthew *2:11).*

6. Both were supposedly miracle workers. *(Muller, Science, p. 27;* Matthew *4:23)*

7. Both were "transfigured" before witnesses. For Buddha and Jesus, this occurred on a mountain: "A flame of light encircled Buddha's head and shone as the sun or moon." *(de Bunsen, p. 45; Beal, p. 177.)* "And [Jesus] was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light." *(*Matthew *17:2).*

8. Both have a trinity to worship. The triple gems 'Buddha, Dhamma, and *Samgha*' in Buddhism and 'Father, Son, and Holy Ghost' in Christianity. *(John Francis Davis, The Chinese (New York, 1836), vol. 2, p. 104;* Matthew *28:19.)*

9. The Buddha's titles were: Savoir of the World *(Child, vol. 1, p. 247.),* Teacher of Gods and Men *(Samuel Johnson, Oriental Religions and Their Relation to Universal Religion, India, (Boston, 1872), p.604),* and Only Begotten *(Ibid.).* Jesus' titles were: Christ (Matthew *11:2)* Messiah *(John 4:26)* Only Begotten *(John 3:18)*

The Resemblance in their teachings

A peculiar similarity of Jesus' teachings to that of the Buddha is also categorically highlighted by John Worldpeace at his website "Worldpeace." He published the comparative sayings of the Buddha quoted from Mahayana scripts and the Bible. He gave the following

[39] Amberly Viscount, *An Analysis of Religious Belief,* New York, 1879, p. 231. ref.25

excerpts[40] from the book, titled "*The Original Jesus: the Buddhist Sources of Christianity",* by Elmar R. Gruber & Holger Kersten.[41]

Regarding purification: Man does not purify (*visuddhi*) himself by wishing as most people do in this world. Anyone who rejects any sin, larger and small, is a holy man because he rejects sins (Ud 33:13). Evil is done through the self; man defiles himself through the self. Evil is made good through the self; man purifies himself through the self (Dh 12:9).

Do not ye yet understand that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things, which proceed out of the mouth, came forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, and blasphemies. These are the things, which defile a man; but to eat with unwashed hands defiled not a man (Matthew15:17-20).

Regarding contentment: Happily shall I live without possessions among those who possess much; among possessors live without possessions?

Happily shall I live without struggling anxiously among the strivers live without striving (GDh 167)

How fortunate are the poor; they have God's kingdom. How fortunate the hungry; they will be fed. How fortunate are those who are crying; they will laugh (QS 8).

Regarding non-violence: Happily shall I live without hostility among the hostile; among the hostile live without hostility (GDh 167). O let us live in joy, free of hatred, among the spiteful; among the spiteful

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[40] Abbreviation: GDh = *Gandhari Dhammaphada*; Ud = ⊗ⓤⓓⓐⓝⓐⓥⓐⓖⓖ Dh = *Dhammapada;* Q = *Quelle* ('source' in German). The source document for the four gospels of the New Testament: *Footnote*: *Words in italics are added by the author*.

[41] Gruber, Elmar R & Kersten, Holger. *The Original Jesus: The Buddhist Sources of Christianity. Ref.26;* and *Comparative Sayings of the Buddha and Jesus* (http://www.johnworldpeace.com/) Ref.27

let us live without hatred. O let us live in joy, free of suffering, among those who suffer; among those who are sore troubled let us live without suffering. O let us live in joy, free of avarice, among those filled with greed; among those who are avaricious let us live without greed. O let us live in joy, we who are free of hindrances. Let us be like the 'Radiant Ones' who are nurtured with love (Dh 15:1-4).

Whoever counters the malicious with malice can never be pure, but he who feels no maliciousness pacifies those who hate. Hatred brings misery to humanity so the wise man knows no hatred (Ud 14:12).

I am telling you, love your enemies, and bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on the cheek, offer your other cheek as well. If anyone grabs your coat, let him have your shirt as well. Give to anyone who asks, and if someone takes away your belongings, do not ask to have them back. As you want people to treat you, do the same to them. (Sermon on the Mount)

Regarding loving-kindness (Metta): *Hostility is never conquered by hostility in this world; hostility is conquered by love. That is the Eternal Law (Dh 1:5):* Surmount hatred by not hating, surmount evil with good; surmount greed through generosity, surmount lies with truth; speak what is true, do not succumb to anger, give when you are asked. Through those three steps you will come close to the gods. (GDh 280-281).

Whosoever does no harm to living creatures, whosoever does not kill or participate in killing, is to be called a holy man. Whosoever is tolerant with the intolerant, whosoever patiently tolerates punishment, and whosoever shows compassion to all creatures, is to be called a holy man (Ud 33:45-46).

If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even tax collectors love those who love them, do they not? And if you embrace only your brothers, what more are you doing than

others? Doesn't everybody do that? If you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even wrongdoers lend to their kind because they expect to be repaid. Instead, love your enemies, do well, and lend without expecting anything in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of God. For, he makes his sun rise on the evil, and on the good; he sends rain on the just and on the unjust (QS 9).

Regarding judgement on others: Judge not the mistakes of others, neither what they do or leave undone, but judge your own deeds, that just and the unjust (GDh 271-272). Don't judge and you won't be judged. For the standard you use (in judging) will be the standard used against you (QS 10). Jesus also advised as follows for criticizing others: How can you say "My friend, let me take the speck out of your eye," when you don't see the log in your own eye? (*Deo Gloria resources* 54)

Regarding right knowledge: O ***Vaseha***, those Brahmins who know the three Vedas are just like a line of blind-men tied together where the first sees nothing, the middle man nothing, and the last sees nothing (*Tevijja-Sutta, Digha-nikÈya,* 13:15). Can the blind lead the blind? Won't they both fall into a pit? A student is not better than his teacher. It is enough for a student to be like his teacher (QS 11).

Regarding introspection: The faults of others are more easily seen than one's own, but seeing one's own failings is difficult. The failings of others are winnowed like chaff in the wind, but one conceals one's own faults like a cheating gambler (Dh 18:18).

The faults of the others are more easily seen than one's own. They are more easily seen because they are winnowed like chaff in the wind, but one's own failings are difficult to see. It is like a cheat concealing his own dice while showing his opponent's, drawing attention to the other's inadequacies and constantly thinking of bringing accusations against him. Such a man is far from seeing what is right, and very much worsens his unfortunate lot (Ud 27:1).

How can you look for the splinter in your brother's eye and not notice the stick in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the splinter in your eye', when you do not see the stick in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the stick from your own eye, and then you can see to remove the splinter that is in your brother's eye (QS 12).

Regarding actions & results - the law of Kamma: No matter what a man does whether his deeds serve virtue or vice, nothing lacks importance. All actions bear a kind of fruit (Ud 9:8). The bad person speaks falsely, chained by his words. He who speaks ill and rejects what is truly just is not wise (Ud 8:9).

A good tree does not bear rotten fruit; a rotten tree does not bear good fruit. Are figs gathered form thorns, or grapes from thistles? Every tree is known by its fruit. The good man produces good things from his store of goods and treasures; and the evil man evil things. For the mouth speaks from a full heart (QS 13).

Regarding the practice: Just as rain penetrates a badly covered house, so passion enters a dispersed mind. Just as rain does not penetrate a well-covered house, so too does passion not enter a well-developed mind (Dh 1:13-14).

Everyone who hears my words and does them is like a man who built a house on rock. The rain fell, a torrent broke against the house, and it did not fall, for it had a rock foundation. But everyone who hears my words and does not do them is like a man who built a house on sand. The rain came, the torrent broke against it, and it collapsed. The ruin of that house was great (QS 14).

Regarding urgency in the practice: The Buddha said, 'When an arrow struck your heart, fire singe your hair, will you first find who shot the arrow, who has burnt your hair? Strike while there is time! When another said, 'Let me first go and bury my father.' Jesus said, 'Leave the dead to bury their dead.' Yet another said, 'I will follow you, sir, but first let me say goodbye to my family.' Jesus

said to him, ‘No one who puts his hand to the plough, and then looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.’ (QS 19).

Regarding merits, Kusala-kamma: People must store up reserves of faith since true merits cannot be taken away and no one need fear thieves. Happy are the disciples who have gained faith, and happy is the wise man when he meets such a believer (Ud 10:11). Sell your possessions and give to charity (alms). Store up treasure for yourselves in a heavenly account, where moths and rust do not consume, and where thieves cannot break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will also be (QS 40).

In this world the wise man holds onto faith and wisdom. Those are his greatest treasures; all other riches he pushes aside (Ud 10:9). Seek after the treasure, which does not perish, which endures in the place where no moth comes near to devour, and no worm ravages (*Thomas* 76).

The heirs are quarrelling over his property, but the King’s being accords with his deeds. None of his possessions follow the dead man: no sons, wives, money, or power. Long life is not achieved through money, and old age is not frightened off by riches. Wisdom is thus better than money since it leads to perfection (*Ratthapala-Sutta, Majjhima Nikaya* 82).

The law of humanity is that, even if people accumulate hundreds and thousands of earthly goods, they nevertheless succumb to the power of death. All stores are scattered; what was built is torn down; everything that comes together must end in separation; and life must terminate in death (Ud 1:20-22).

He (Jesus) told them a parable, saying – "he land of a rich man produced in abundance, and he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' Then he said, 'I will do this. I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul you have ample goods stored for many years. Take it easy. Eat, drink, and be merry.' But God said to him, 'Foolish man? This very

night you will have to give back your soul, and the things you produced, whose will they be?' That is what happens to the one who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich in the sight of God (QS 38)." Jesus also advised : “Owning a lot of things won’t make your life safe. What will you gain if you own the whole world, but destroy yourself.” (*Deo Gloria Resources* 54)

A wandering monk should neither despise what he has received nor should he envy what others get. The envious monk does not achieve deep contemplation (Dh 25:6). The wise man does not make friends with the unbelieving, greedy, slanderous or quarrelsome. The wise man avoids the evil (Ud 25:1).

Regarding wisdom: Whosoever is free of worries, holding onto truth and the Dhamma, will cross the sea of life, will put an end to suffering (Mahaparinibbana Sutta 3:66).

Jesus said: *He who would know everything, but fails to know himself misses the knowledge of everything (Thomas 67).*

Whosoever has heard the law of virtue and vice is as a man who has eyes and carries a lamp, seeing everything. He will become completely wise (Ud 22:4). Just as a lotus blossom, scented and beautiful, can blossom on a dunghill at the side of a road, so too radiates the wisdom of the Buddha’s pupils who have realized the Dhamma, while normal mortals are blind (GDh 303-304).

No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bushel basket, but on a lamp stand**.** And those in the house see the light. The lamp of the body is the eye. If your eye is good your whole body will be full of light. But if it is bad your whole body will be full of darkness. If the light in you is darkness, how great is that darkness (QS 33).

The wise man should renounce the way of darkness and follow the way of light (Dh 6:12). This world is veiled in darkness; few there can see. Only a few enter into the realm of bliss, just as only a few birds escape the net (Dh 13:8).

Because of that I say this: Whoever is emptied will be filled with light; but whoever is divided will be filled with darkness (Thomas 61).

Regarding temptation: Gotama Buddha had withdrawn to a forest hut at Kosala in the Himalayas for solitary reflection. Then Mara knew the thought that had arisen in the Enlightened One, and he went to the Buddha: 'O Lord, may the Enlightened One reign as King, may the Perfected One reign with justice, without killing or ordering killings, without being oppressive or serving oppression, without suffering form pain or causing pain to others.' The Buddha answered: "What does thou have in mind, O Evil One, that thou speak thus with me?" Mara responded: 'The Enlightened One, O Lord, has assumed the fourfold might of miracles. If the Enlightened One so wished, he could command the Himalayas, the king of mountains to become gold.' The Buddha turned him away: 'What would it help the wise man to own a mountain of gold or silver? Whosoever has recognized the cause of suffering, how should he succumb to desires?' Then replied Mara: 'The Enlightened One knows me, the Perfected One knows me,' and, grieved and discontented, he went away (Marasamyutta from the Samyutta-nikaya II 10).

Jesus was led into the wilderness by the spirit for trial by the accuser. He fasted for forty days and was hungry. The accuser said, 'If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.' But Jesus answered: 'It is written, "No one lives by bread alone." Then, the accuser took him to Jerusalem and placed him at the highest point of the temple and said to him: 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, "He will command his angels to protect you", and "They will carry you with their hands, so that your foot will not strike a stone." Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "You shall not put the lord your God to the test." Then, the accuser took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour, and he said to him: "All these I will give you if you will do obeisance and reverence me." Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "You shall reverence the

lord your God and serve him alone." Then, the accuser left him (QS 6).

The *Mara,* the Evil One, spent six difficult years, constantly following the *Bodhisatta* , always looking for, seeking an opportunity to get the better of him, but he never succeeded. When he did get a chance, he had to leave frustrated and wrathful (*Lalitavistara* XVIII*).*

And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season (Luke 4:13).

Better than reigning supreme over the earth, better than ruling heaven, better than dominating all worlds, is the reward of the *sotapatti* way (Dh 13:12). For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away (Luke 9:25). For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? (Matthew16:26; Mark 8:36). Jesus also emphasized on the importance of the mind in doing actions: "Anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (*Deo Gloria Resources*, 54)

Similarities as per the scriptures that have survived destruction

The Nag Hammadi Library is a collection of thirteen ancient codices, containing over fifty texts that were discovered in Upper Egypt in 1945. It contains the earliest known writings of the dialogues of Jesus `The Saviour'; texts once thought to have been entirely destroyed during the early Christian struggle to define "orthodoxy".

The followings are the excerpts from the *Book of Thomas the Contender*, translated by John D. Turner; The Nag Hammadi

Library**,** *The Gnostic Society Library*. (Judas Thomas was known as the brother of Jesus; see *The Bible Fraud*).[42]

The secret words that the saviour spoke to *Judas Thomas* which I, even I, Mathais, wrote down, while I was walking, listening to them speak with one another. The saviour said, "Brother Thomas, while you have time in the world, listen to me, and I will reveal to you the things you have pondered in your mind. Now, since it has been said that you are my twin and true companion, examine yourself, and learn who you are, in what way you exist, and how you will come to be. Since you will be called my brother, it is not fitting that you be ignorant of yourself. And I know that you have understood, because you had already understood that I am the knowledge of the truth. So while you accompany me, although you are uncomprehending, you have (in fact) already come to know, and you will be called - the one who knows himself. For he who has not known himself has known nothing, but he who has known himself has at the same time already achieved knowledge about the depth of the all. So then, you, my brother Thomas, have beheld what is obscure to men, that is, what they ignorantly stumble against." Now Thomas said to the lord, "*Therefore I beg you to tell me what I ask you before your ascension, and when I hear from you about the hidden things, then I can speak about them. And it is obvious to me that the truth is difficult to perform before men."*

If we look at the above discussion between brothers, it is quite evident that Jesus knew that his teachings would be difficult to accept by the Jews.

Mori's post

Here's the edited version of what *Norihisa Mori* has posted in his discussion to the "Triple Gem" Group on the 4th July 2004.[43] The

[42] *Book of Thomas the Contender*, translated by John D. Turner; The Nag Hammadi Library, The Gnostic Society Library. Ref.28< ***http://www.gnosis.org/naghamm/nhl.html>***

texts in this collection are from *The Book of Thomas the Contender*, translated by John D. Turner and *The Gospel of Thomas*. Mori extracted parts that are striking resemblance to Buddhism. [44]

Introspection and wisdom

The Book of Thomas the Contender: Jesus speaking to Thomas: "Now, since it has been said that you are my twin and true companion, examine yourself, and learn who you are, in what way you exist, and how you will come to be.

Since you will be called my brother, it is not fitting that you be ignorant of yourself. You will be called 'the one who knows himself'. For he who has not known himself has known nothing, but he who has known himself has at the same time already achieved knowledge about the depth of the all. So then, you, my brother Thomas, have beheld what is obscure to men, that is, what they ignorantly stumble against."

Relationship to the *Pali* Canon: The practice of *Satipatthana* (Self-awareness) is just that - to understand the self and in what way we exist.

Fasting and morality

Gospel of Thomas: His disciples questioned him and said to him, "Do you want us to fast? How shall we pray? Shall we give alms? What diet shall we observe?" Jesus said, "Do not tell lies, and do not do what you hate, for all things are plain in the sight of heaven. For nothing hidden will not become manifest, and nothing covered will remain without being uncovered."

Jesus said to them, "If you fast, you will give rise to sin for yourselves; and if you pray, you will be condemned; and if you give alms, you will do harm to your spirits. When you go into any land and walk about in the districts, if they receive you, eat what they will

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[43] ("nori" <nori_public@att.net>) ***http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ Triplegem***

[44] Words in italic and underlined are added by the authors.

set before you, and heal the sick among them. For what goes into your mouth will not defile you, but that which issues from your mouth - it is that which will defile you." *(Here, we think Jesus has emphasized more on morality than on rituals like fasting, praying and alms giving.)*

The nature of association with others

The Book of Thomas the Contender: "If, now, you desire to become perfect, you shall observe these things; if not, your name is 'Ignorant', since it is impossible for an intelligent man to dwell with a fool, for the intelligent man is perfect in all wisdom. To the fool, however, the good and bad are the same - indeed the wise man will be nourished by the truth…."

Relationship to the *Pali* Canon: "It is in accordance with their properties that beings come together & associate with one another. Beings of low dispositions come together & associate with beings of low dispositions. Beings of admirable dispositions come together & associate with beings of admirable dispositions …: The underbrush born of association by non-association." Iti 3; 78.

Reincarnation/rebirth

The Gospel of Thomas: Jesus said, "Blessed is the lion which becomes man when consumed by man; {Here, I believe he is implying that when the lion is consumed by man, the lion is paying its debt (*Vipaka*) and so doing its penance; there after it is reincarnated into man.} "... and cursed is the man whom the lion consumes, and the lion becomes man." {*The man is consumed by a lion as a result of his corruption and bad kamma, and as the lion's actions are in accord with the natural order (or what 'God' intended), the lion is not punished; instead he is rewarded for doing 'Gods'/Natures intended deed.* This indicates that Jesus has preached rebirth of animals as humans and vice versa.}

Impermanence (Anicca)

The Book of Thomas the Contender: "... but these visible bodies survive by devouring creatures similar to them with the result that the bodies change. Now that which changes will decay and perish, and has no hope of life from then on, since that body is bestial. So, just as the body of the beasts perishes, so also will these formations perish ..."

Relationship to the Pali Canon: Buddha's doctrine of impermanence.

Cessation of suffering (*dukkha*) – Nirodha-sacca and entering Nibbana

The Book of Thomas the Contender: "... watch and pray that you not come to be in the flesh, but rather that you come forth from the bondage of the bitterness of this life. ...", " ... for when you come forth from the sufferings and passions of the body, you will receive rest from the good one, and you will reign with the king, you joined with him and he with you, from now on, for ever and ever, Amen."

We also found a book in Mahayana texts that has identical quotations from the Gospel.

In the Revelation of St. John, a Christian scripture written down in Greek in the Eastern Mediterranean (v. 1), refers to a book closely sealed with seven seals. St. John weeps bitterly (v. 4) because he sees no one worthy to open the book and to break its seals. This can be done by the Lamb alone, slaughtered in sacrifice (v. 9).

There is a similar book in Mahayana Buddhism, The Perfection of Wisdom sealed with seven seals, written in Sanskrit in South India. The book has 8000 lines and in chapters 30 and 31, it describes in detail how Ever weeping *Bodhisatta* slaughtered himself in sacrifice, and how he thereby became worthy of the Perfection of Wisdom.

This parallel is remarkable not only for the similarities of the religious logic, but also for the fact that both have seven seals.

Prophecies

Prophecies on the End of the World[45]

The Buddha has given a discourse on how this *Bhadda-kappa* would come to an end and that a last Buddha would appear before that period to save mankind. (*Anguttara Nikaya* VII.62)

Likewise, Jesus prophesied the end of the world in the Sermon of the Last Things delivered on the Mount of Olives. (Synoptical Gospels)

The resemblance of the two prophecies has been compiled and edited by Christopher *M.* Weimer, from a publication in the Open Court monthly magazine Vol XIV. It is based on the Sermon on the Seven Suns (*Anguttara Nikaya* VII.62), translated from *Pali* by *Albert J* Edmunds, and on the Gospels. Here are some of the details of the compilation. A late expansion of this discourse is given by Warren, in his *Buddhism in Translations* from Buddha*gosa*'s Path of Purity, a *Pali* compendium of the fifth century AD. When Warren wrote, the *Pali* original had not as yet appeared in the edition of the *Pali* Text Society, which is printed in Roman letters. It is well known to *New Testament* scholars that the great Eschatological Discourse in the Synoptical Gospels (i.e., the Sermon on the Last Things, delivered upon the Mount of Olives) is a blending of historical and spiritual vatic nation.[46]

The Evangelist Luke attempted to separate the spiritual prophecy from the historical prediction, putting the former into his

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[45] *The Open Court* Monthly Magazine Vol XIV It is based on the Sermon on the Seven Suns (*Anguttara Nikaya* VII.62) translated from *Pali* by Albert J Edmunds, and on the Gospels. Ref.29

[46] Haverford College Studies for 1893; *Our Lord's Quotation from the First Book of Maccabees* Ref.30

seventeenth chapter and the latter into his twenty-first. But Luke evidently understood even the physical cataclysm to refer to the siege of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Hebrew State. Even Mark and the *editor of* Matthew probably understood the same thing, though English translations of Matthew make his "consummation of the aeon" - the "end of the world." After the siege, the early Christians evidently made this *Eschatological Discourse* refer to a cosmic convulsion. But the only words which can justly apply to such a thing are those in all three of the Synoptists: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." We have therefore used this verse among our parallels to Buddha's present discourse, but have reserved the text of the Gospel prophecy for a forthcoming translation from the famous *Anagata-bhayani*, selected by Asoko among his favourite texts. Its subject is the decline of religion.

The end of the world is also described briefly in the Bible.

Mark xiii. 31. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

2 Peter iii. 10. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the heavenly bodies (or elements) shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up (or, discovered).

Rev. xxi. 1. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more.

Numerical Collection VII. 62.

Thus have I heard? At one season, the Blessed One was staying in the grove of *Ambapala* at *Vesala*. And the Blessed One addressed the monks, saying: "Monks!" "Lord!" answered those monks, in reply to him. The Blessed One spoke thus: "Impermanent, O monks, are the constituents of existence,

unstable, non-eternal: so much so, that this alone is enough to weary and disgust one with all constituent things, and emancipate there from. *Sineru*, monks, the monarch of mountains, is eighty-four thousand leagues in length and breadth; eighty-four thousand leagues deep in the great ocean, and eighty-four thousand above it.

Now there comes, O monks, a season when, after many years, many hundreds, many thousands and hundreds of thousands of years, it does not rain; and while it rains not, all seedlings and vegetation, all plants, grasses, and trees dry up, wither away and cease to be. Thus, monks, constituent things are impermanent, unstable, and non-eternal: so much so, that this alone is enough to weary and disgust one therewith and emancipate there from. And, monks, there comes a season, at vast intervals in the lapse of time, when a second sun appears.

After the appearance of the second sun, monks, the brooks and ponds dry up, vanish away and cease to be. So impermanent are constituent things! And then, monks, there comes a season, at vast intervals in the lapse of time, when a third sun appears; and thereupon the great rivers: to wit, the Ganges, the Jamuna, the Rapti, the Gogra, the Mahi, --dry up, vanish away and cease to be.

At length, after another vast period, a fourth sun appears, and thereupon the great lakes, whence those rivers had their rise: namely, *Anotatto*, Lion-leap, Chariot-maker, Keel-bare, Cuckoo, Six-bayed, and Slow-flow, dry up, vanish away, and cease to be.

Again, monks, when, after another long lapse, a fifth sun appears, the waters in the great ocean go down for an hundred leagues; then for two hundred, three hundred, and even unto seven hundred leagues, until the water stands only seven fan-palms' deep, and so on unto one fan-palm; then seven fathoms' deep, and so on unto one fathom, half a fathom; waist-deep, knee-deep, ankle-deep. Even, O monks, as in the fall season, when it rains in large drops, the waters in some places are standing around the feet of the kine (cattle); even so, monks, the waters in the great ocean in

some places are standing to the depth of kine-feet. After the appearance of the fifth sun, monks, the water in the great ocean is not the measure of a finger-joint. Then at last, after another lapse of time, a sixth sun appears; whereupon this great earth and *Sineru*, the monarch of mountains, reek and fume and send forth clouds of smoke. Even as a potter's baking, when first besmeared, doth reek and fume and smoke, such is the smoke of earth and mountains when the sixth sun appears.

After a last vast interval, a seventh sun appears, and then, monks, this great earth, and *Sineru*, the monarch of mountains, flare and blaze, and become one mass of flame. And now, from earth and mountains burning and consuming, a spark is carried by the wind and goes as far as the worlds of God; and the peaks of Mount *Sineru*, burning, consuming, perishing, go down in one vast mass of fire and crumble for an hundred, yea, five hundred leagues. And of this great earth, monks, and *Sineru*, the monarch of mountains, when consumed and burnt, neither ashes nor soot remains. Just as when ghee or oil is consumed and burnt, monks, neither ashes nor soot remains, so it is with the great earth and Mount *Sineru*. Thus, Monks, impermanent are the constituents of existence, unstable, non-eternal: so much so, that this alone is enough to weary and disgust one with all constituent things and emancipate there from. Therefore, Monks, do those who deliberate and believe[1] say this: 'This earth and *Sineru*, the monarch of mountains, will be burnt and perish and exist no more,' excepting those who have seen the path.

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A History of the Future
Robert A. Nelson *(quotation form website:www.rexresearch.com)*

As do the Christian, Jewish and Moslem religions, the Asian faiths of the Hindus, Buddhists, Zoroastrians and Baha'i also include detailed prophecies that warn of the impending end of this cycle of civilization,

and the return of a World Savoir. The Japanese yearn for the arrival of Miroku Bantsu or Rigden Japo. The Altai of Asia calls him the White Burkhan and Oirot ("Messenger"). Hindus expect the advent of the Kalki Avatar and Maitreya by the Buddhists. He is called the Saoshyant by the Zoroastrians. Tibetans expect the advent of Gessar Khan to save them from the Chinese.

Hindu Prophecy

According to Hindu cosmology, the universe is cyclical, passing through four world ages. Each yuga, as they are called, is shorter and less pleasant than the previous epoch due to the degeneration of morality. Currently we are in the last, the Kala Yuga, in which dharma (correct behaviour), is only one-fourth of its beginning quality. The Kala Yuga is only 4,320,000 years long. At its end, religion will disintegrate and society will become more secular. When the world becomes hopelessly degenerate, it will end in catastrophe and a new mahayuga ("great yuga") will begin. One thousand yugas is one day in the life of Brahma, the godhead of Hinduism. At the end of each day, the universe comes to an end and is reabsorbed into the Brahma for an equally long night, during which time it exists only potentially. He reappears at dawn, and creation begins anew. The present age is the first day of the 51st year of Brahma's life. He lives 100 years, each of which comprises 360 days and nights. Then he dies, and the universe is dissolved into nothingness that lasts for another cosmic century. Then he is reborn to live another 311,040 billion years.

The Kali Yuga allegedly began in 3012 BC, so apparently we have many cosmic hours to wait for it to end; nevertheless, many people believe that the end is nigh. At that time, the Kalki (White Horse) Avatar, the tenth and final incarnation of Vishnu, will arrive. The heavens will open and he will appear on his white horse with his sword "blazing like a comet". He will destroy the wicked and restore purity. Entire continents will sink and rise in the process.

The eschatological Hindu text *Divya Maha Kala Jnana* ("The Divine Knowledge of Time") allegedly was composed circa 1000 AD by Jagas Guru Srimad Virat Potaluru Veera Brahmendra Maha Swami. The book describes social conditions before the arrival of Kali Purusha, the Kalki Avatar, by the Kali year 5101 (~ 1999 AD). That being is the incarnation of Kali, the destructive and procreative female aspect of Brahma. At that time, Kali Purusha will be called Sree Sree Sree ("Thrice Great") Veera Bhoga Vasataraya Maha Swami. The text *Kala Jnana* also describes the current world conditions of sexual perversion and horrid disasters that precede the end of this era of errors.

The *Vishnu Purana* (4: 24) advises us as follows about the conditions at the end of this civilization:

"The leaders who will rule over the earth will be violent and will seize the goods of their subjects. The caste of servants will prevail and the outcasts will rule. Short will be their lives, insatiable their appetites; they will hardly understand the meaning of piety. Those with possessions will abandon agriculture and commerce and will live as servants or following various possessions. The leaders, with excuses of fiscal need, will rob and despoil their subjects and take away private property. Moral values and the rule of law will lessen from day to day until the world will be completely perverted and agnosticism will gain the day among men.

"The causes of devotion will be confined to physical well-being; the only bond between the sexes will be passion; the only road to success will be the lie. The earth will be honoured for its material treasure only. The priestly vestments will be a substitute for the quality of the priest. A simple ablution will mean purification, the race will be incapable of producing divine birth. Men will ask: what authority has the traditional tests? Marriage will cease being a rite. Acts of devotion, however scanty, will not produce any result. Every way of life will be equally promiscuous for all. Those who own and spend more money will be the bosses of men who will have only one aim, the gaining of wealth however dishonestly. Every man will consider himself as good as a

Brahmin. Men will be terrified of death and fear scarcity; by this alone they will keep up an outward appearance of religious feeling. Women will not obey the orders of their husbands or their parents. They will be selfish, abject, liars, fallen and given to evil ways. Their aims in life will be sensual satisfaction only.

"When the practices taught by the Vedas and the institutes of law shall nearly have ceased, and the close of the Kali age shall be nigh, a portion of that divine being who exists of his own spiritual nature in the character of Brahma, and who is the beginning and the end, and who comprehends all things, shall descend upon the earth. He will be born as Kalki in the family of an eminent Brahmin of Sambhala village, endowed with the eight superhuman faculties. By his irresistible might he will destroy all the barbarians and thieves, and all whose minds are devoted to iniquity. He will then re-establish righteousness upon earth; and the minds of those who live at the end of the Kali age shall be awakened, and shall be as pellucid as crystal. The men who are thus changed by virtue of that peculiar time shall be as the seeds of human beings, and shall give birth to a race who shall follow the laws of the Krita age, the Age of Purity."

Buddhist Prophecy

The Buddhist teachings describe the Kalachakra (Wheel of Time), which revolves in cycles like the Hindu yugas. According to the Maitreyavyankarna ("Prophecy of Maitreya"), Buddha will incarnate as Lord Maitreya ("The Buddha Who Returns") at the end of the present cycle after major geological catastrophes have so changed the face of the planet that he can walk from continent to continent. During his reign, humanity will attain salvation, and even the gods will be liberated from their desires.

The last Hindu Avatar explained the job to Bharata Prince Arjuna, as recorded in the *Bhagavad-Gita* (4:7-8):

"Whenever there is decay of righteousness... and there is exaltation of unrighteousness, then I Myself come forth... for the destruction of evil-doers, for the sake of firmly establishing righteousness, I am born from age to age."

In the *Surangama Sutra*, Gautama Buddha told his disciple Sariputta of the signs that precede the end of the age:

"After my decease, first will occur the five disappearances. And what are the five disappearances? The disappearance of attainments [to Nirvana], the disappearance of the method [of doing so], the disappearance of [spiritual] learning, the disappearance of the symbols [of Buddhism], the disappearance of the relics...

"Then when the Dispensation of the perfect Buddha is 5,000 years old, the relics, not receiving reverence and honour will go to places where they can receive them... This, Sariputta, is called the disappearance of relics."

Buddha

In another conversation with Ananda, recorded in the text *Vinya Pitaka* (II: 253), the Buddha modified this prophecy, reducing the time by half:

"If, Ananda, women had not retired from the household life to the houseless one, under the doctrine and discipline announced by the Tathagata [another Buddha], Dharma would long endure; a thousand years would the good Dharma abide. But since, Ananda, women have now retired from the household life to the houseless one, under the doctrine and the discipline announced by the Tathagata, not long Ananada, will Dharma endure; but five hundred years, Ananda, until the Dharma abide".

The Chinese Buddhist text *Abhidharmakosha* (4.12c. III) affords a few more details about this prophecy:

"The monks and stream-attainers will be strong in their union with Dharma for 500 years after the Blessed One's Parinirvana. In the second 500 years they will be strong in meditation; in the third period of 500 years they will be strong in erudition. In the fourth 500-year period they will only be occupied with gift-giving. The final or fifth period of 500 years will see only fighting and reproving among the monks and followers. The pure Dharma will then become invisible."

In Chapter 26 of *Digha Nikaya*, we are told:

"At that period, brethren, there will arise in the world an Exalted One named Maitreya, Fully Awakened, abounding in wisdom and goodness, happy, with knowledge of the worlds, unsurpassed as a guide to mortals willing to be led, a teacher for gods and men, an Exalted One, a Buddha, even as I am now. He, by himself, will thoroughly know and see, as it was face to face, this universe, with Its worlds of the spirits, Its Brahmas and Its Maras, and Its world of recluses and Brahmins, of princes and peoples, even as I now, by myself, thoroughly know and see them."

Elsewhere, the Buddha said of Maitreya:

"Maitreya, the best of men, will then leave the Tushita heavens, and go for his last rebirth. As soon as he is born he will walk seven steps forward, and where he puts down his feet a jewel or a lotus will spring up. He will raise his eyes to the ten directions, and will speak these words, 'This is my last birth. There will be no rebirth after this one. Never will I come back here, but, all pure, I shall win Nirvana."

In recent years, a claimant calling himself Maitreya, with headquarters in England, has been offering himself to the world. He was born in 1944 in

Iran, and claims to be a descendant of the Iranian king Nader Shad. His apologists offer numerous prophetic "proofs" of his authenticity, but all of them are dubious. In particular, he forgot to walk and talk at birth, and lotuses fail to sprout in his footsteps.

"Maitreya"

The Gautama Buddha also made this prophecy concerning the advent of Maitreya:

"And the Blessed One said to Ananda, I am not the first Buddha, nor shall I be the last. In due time another Buddha will arise in the world, a Holy One, a supremely enlightened one, endowed with wisdom, auspicious, embracing the Universe, an incomparable Leader of Men, a Ruler of Devas and mortals. He will reveal to you the same eternal truths, which I have taught you. He will establish His Law, glorious in its spirit and in the letter. He will proclaim a righteous life wholly perfect and pure, such as I now proclaim. His disciples will number many thousands while mine number many hundreds.'

"Ananda said, 'How shall we know Him?'

"The Blessed One said, 'He will be known as Maitreya.'

In the sacred text *Anagatavamsa*, the sage Sariputta asked Buddha Arahant about the future Buddha, and was told:

"I am now the perfect Buddha;
And there will be Maitreya too
Before this same auspicious aeon
Runs to the end of its years.
The perfect Buddha, Maitreya,
By name, supreme of men."

On another occasion, Sariputta asked after Maitreya again, and the Buddha replied:

"At that time, the ocean will lose much of its water, and there will be much less of it than now. In consequence a world-ruler will have no difficulties in passing across it. India, this island of Jambu, will be quite flat everywhere, it will measure ten thousand leagues, and all men will have the privilege of living on it. It will have innumerable inhabitants, who will commit no crimes or evil deeds, but will take pleasure in doing good... Human beings are then without any blemishes, moral offences are unknown among them, and they are full of zest and joy. Their bodies are very large and their skin has a fine hue. Their strength is quite extraordinary. Three kinds of illness only are known --- people must relieve their bowels, they must eat, they must get old...

"Maitreya, the best of men, will then leave the Tushita heavens, and go for his last rebirth into the womb of that woman [Brahmavati]... As soon as he is born he will walk seven steps forward, and where he puts down his feet a jewel or a lotus will spring up. He will raise his eyes to the ten directions, and will speak these words: 'This is my last birth. There will be no more rebirths after this one. Never will I come back here, but, all pure, I shall in Nirvana!'...

"For 60,000 years Maitreya, the best of men, will preach the true Dharma, which is compassionate towards all living beings. And when he has disciplined in his true Dharma hundreds and hundreds of millions of living beings, then that leader will at last enter Nirvana. And after the great sage has entered Nirvana, his true Dharma still endured for another 10,000 years..."

The Buddha also described the decline of religion in the latter days of this age: "How will it occur?

After my decease there will first be five disappearances. What five?

The disappearance of attainment (in the Dispensation); the disappearance of proper conduct; the disappearance of learning; the disappearance of outward form; the disappearance of the relics, there will be these five disappearances before the appearance of the next Buddha.

"Here attainment means that for a thousand years only after the Lord's complete Nirvana will monks be able to practice analytical insights. As time goes on and on these disciples of mine are non-returners and once-returners and stream-winners. There will be no disappearance of attainment for these. But with the extinction of the last stream-winner's life, attainment will have disappeared....

"The disappearance of proper conduct means that, being unable to practice jhana, insight, the Ways and the fruits, they will guard no more the four entire purities of moral habit. As time goes on and on they will only guard the four offences entailing defeat. While there are even a hundred or a thousand monks who guard and bear in mind the four offences entailing defeat, there will be no disappearance of proper conduct. With the breaking of moral habit by the last monk or the extinction of his life, proper conduct will have disappeared...

"The disappearance of learning means that as long as there stand firm the texts with the commentaries pertaining to the word of the Buddha in the three Pitakas, for so long there will be no disappearance of learning. As time goes on and on there will be base-born kings, not Dharma-men; their ministers and so on will not be Dharma-men, and consequently the inhabitants of the kingdom and so on will not be Dharma-men. Because they are not Dharma-men it will not rain properly. Therefore the crops will not flourish well, and in consequence the donors or requisites to the community of monks will not be able to give them the requisites. Not receiving the requisites the monks will not receive pupils. As time goes on and on, learning will decay. In this decay the Great Patthana itself will decay first... While a four-line stanza continues to exist among men, there will not be a disappearance of learning. When a king who has faith

has had a purse containing a thousand coins placed in a golden casket on an elephant's back, and has had the drum sounded in the city up to the third time, to the effect that: 'Whoever knows a stanza uttered by the Buddhas, let him take these thousand coins together with the royal elephant' --- but yet finding no one knowing a four-line stanza, the purse containing the thousand coins must be taken back into the palace again --- then will be the disappearance of learning...

"As time goes on and on each of the last monks, carrying his robe, bowl, and tooth-pick like Jin recluses, having taken a bottle-gourd and turned it into a bowl for alms food, will wander about with it in his hands, thinking, 'What's the good of this yellow robe?' and cutting off a small piece of one and sticking it on his nose or ear or in his hair, he will wander about supporting wife and children by agriculture, trade and the like. Then he will give a gift to the Southern community for those of bad moral habit. I say that he will then acquire an incalculable fruit of the gift. As time goes on and on, thinking: 'What's the good of this to us?', having thrown away the piece of yellow robe, he will carry beasts and birds in the forest. At this time the outward form will have disappeared...

"Then when the Dispensation of the Perfect Buddha is 5,000 years old, the relics, not receiving reverence and honour, will go to places where they can receive them. As time goes on and on there will not be reverence and honour for them in every place: from the abode of serpents and the deva-world and the Brahma-world, having gathered together in a space round the great Bo-tree, having made a Buddha-image, and having performed a 'miracle' like the Twin-miracle, will teach Dharma. No human being will be found at that place. All the devas of the 10,000 world system, gathered together, will hear Dharma and many thousands of them will attain to Dharma. And these will cry aloud, saying: 'Behold, devatas, a week from today our One of the Ten Powers will attain complete Nirvana.' They will weep, saying: 'Henceforth there will be darkness for us.' Then the relics, producing the condition of heat, will burn up that image leaving no remainder.

"That, Sariputta, is called the disappearance of the relics."

The Buddhist sage Nichiren (1222-1282) left these specific notes of the signs of our times:

"When, at a certain future time, the union of the state law and the Buddhist Truth shall be established, and the harmony between the two completed, both sovereign and subjects will faithfully adhere to the Great Mysteries. Then the golden age, such as were the ages under the reign of the sage kings of old, will be realized in these days of degeneration and corruption, in the time of the Latter Law. Then the establishment of the Holy See will be completed, by imperial grant and the edict of the Dictator, at a spot comparable in its excellence with the Paradise of Vulture Peak. We have only to wait for the coming of the time. Then the moral law will be achieved in the actual life of mankind. The Holy See will be the seat where all men of the three countries [India, China and Japan] and the whole jambudvipa [world] will be initiated into the mysteries of confession and expiation; and even the great deities, Brahma and Indra, will come down into the sanctuary and participate in the initiation."

Nicholas Roerich, who travelled in Asia during the 1920s, transmitted this Tibetan prophecy of the end of the present era:

"First, will begin an unprecedented war of nations. Afterwards brother will rise against brother. Oceans of blood shall flow. And the people shall cease to understand one another. They shall forget the meaning of the word teacher. But just then shall the Teachers appear and in all the corners of the world shall be heard the true teaching. To this word of truth shall the people be drawn, but those who are filled with darkness and ignorance shall set obstacles. As a diamond glows the light in the tower of the Lord of Shambhala. One stone on his ring is worth more than all the world's treasure. Even those who by accident help the Teachings of Shambhala will receive in return a hundredfold. Already many warriors of the truth are reincarnated. Only a few years shall

elapse before everyone shall hear the mighty steps of the Lord of the New Era. And one can already perceive the unusual manifestations and encounter unusual people. Already they open the gates of knowledge and ripened fruits are falling from the trees..."

For many centuries, the mystical tradition of Agharti (or, Aghartha) and its ruler, the King of the World, has existed in Tibet and Mongolia. Many people believe Agharti to be a real place, a hidden civilization located in a series of huge caverns under Tibet and Mongolia, with secret entrances all over the earth. Whenever the King of the World makes prophecies, the birds and animals on the surface suddenly become silent. Hundreds of years ago, the King of the World uttered a prophecy that pertains to the present state of human society:

"Men will increasingly neglect their souls. The greatest corruption will reign on earth. Men will become like bloodthirsty animals, thirsting for the blood of their brothers. The crescent [Islam] will become obscured, and its followers will descend into lies and perpetual warfare. The crowns of kings will fall.

"There will be terrible war between all the earth's peoples; entire nations will die --- hunger, crimes unknown to law, formerly unthinkable to the world. The persecuted will demand the attention of the whole world. The ancient roads will be filled with multitudes going from one place to another. The greatest and most beautiful cities will perish by fire. Families will be dispersed; faith and love will disappear. The world will be emptied.

"Within fifty years there will be only three great nations. Then, within fifty years, there will be 18 years of war and cataclysms. Then the peoples of Agharti will leave their subterranean caverns and will appear on the surface of the earth."

The related prophecy of the idyllic hidden kingdom of Shambhala states that each of its 32 kings will rule for 100 years. While they reign, conditions in the outside world will deteriorate. Men will fight more and more wars, seek power for its own sake, and materialism will reign. These modern barbarians will unite under an evil king and conquer the earth. When they think that nothing is left to conquer, the mystic mist will evaporate to reveal Shambhala. The huge army of barbarians will attack Shambhala. King Rudra Cakrin will lead the fight against the invaders, who will be destroyed in a final great battle.

The Second Coming of Jesus

It is well known to the Christians that Jesus would be coming back to the human world from heaven to salvage mankind, although the date mentioned in the Bible is highly controversial and unrealistic. There is a great deal in the Bible about the second coming of Jesus. Some has said that the second coming of our Lord is mentioned one hundred and twenty times in the New Testament. Another has said that four per cent of the New Testament is given to this one subject. Still another has said that one verse out of every twenty-six in the entire Bible mentions the second coming of Christ.

Unto them that look for Him shall he appear the second time. (Heb. 9:28) If you feel that you know it all and are not a seeker. He simply shall not appear to you.

That when He cometh and knocketh, they may open unto Him immediately (Luke 12:36).

Promise of another comforter by Jesus!

The following quotations are taken from Prophecies of the Ages[47] *(http://www.dayofgod.net/).*

[47] *Prophecies of the Ages Ref.31 (**http://www.dayofgod.net/**)*

If ye love Me, keep My commandment, and I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you for ever ...' John 14:15 - 16

"For If I (Jesus) go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you ...I have yet many things to say unto you, but you can not bear them now. However when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth for He will not speak on His own, but whatever He hears..." (John 16: 7 – 13). But when the comforter comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of me...(John 15:26)

Jesus clearly states that God shall send us another Comforter over and above the Holy Spirit like Jesus Christ. He will teach man what people did not have capacity to understand at that time. We must try not to make the same mistake that the Jews made at the time of Christ by expecting the prophecies to happen in a physical and literal manner**.**

I am the bread of the life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst," (John 6:35)

Universal view of the second coming

Major religions have a prophecy on the future messiah; Hinduism has Kalki Avatar, the incarnation of Krishna; Judaism has the Lord of Hosts, the incarnation of the Everlasting Father; Islamic Shiahs have Imam Husayn; Zoroastrians have Shah-Bahram; Christianity has Jesus; and Buddhism has the *Bodhisatta Metteyya*. It has increasingly become popular to congregate the interpretations of different faiths, and merge the future messiahs into one who will represent all faiths. They call themselves the New Order, Baha'i Religion, etc. which may perhaps become popular and acceptable to the majority in the future.

A website on Masters/Buddhas/*Maitreya*[48] wrote as follows:

Our celebration of the presence of Lord *Maitreya* (*Metteyya)* is profound, alive and very much quickened. Although *Maitreya* comes to us out of the historical setting of Buddhism, for us he is not only the Coming Buddha who has come but also the representative of the Universal Christ. *Maitreya* holds the office in the hierarchy of the Great White Brotherhood of representative of the Universal, or Cosmic, Christ; and that Christ individualized is none other than our Holy Christ Self. Thus, when we encounter *Maitreya*, we see personified in him, more than in any other Master, the mirror image of our Holy Christ Self, who is after all our True Self. Conversely, when we behold our beloved Christ Self face to face, we see the image of *Maitreya* reflected in this our individualization of the God Flame.

Another website of the Baha'i faith wrote the following quotations:[49] "the equivalent of "Glory of His Father "or "Glory of God" in Arabic is "Baha'u'llah". "Baha" means glory and light, "Allah" simply means God."

The Bab symbolically is the coming of the Son of Man and Baha'u'llah is the coming of the Father. (As John the Baptist was return of Elijah.) "The Glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the Gate facing towards the east." Ezekiel 43-4

"Bab" is an Arabic word meaning "Gate". In 1844, in Shiraz (near Shoosh) in Elam, a young man took this title and declared his mission as the forerunner of the One greater than Himself. He was 25 years old at that time, and after a few years, He and 20,000 of His followers were executed by the government at the request of the fanatic clergy. By looking at the history of the Middle East during the 19th century, we find that the Persian government, under strong influence of the Moslem clergy, was shaken by the Bab's

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[48] The *Buddha Maitreya*. Ref.32 ***http://www.tsl.org/Masters/ buddhas/maitreya.htm***
[49] *(Taken from a BUPC transcribe of Dr. Leland Jensen's fireside class*.) Ref.33 ***http:// www.alaska.net /~peace/bahaullah.htm***

announcement that "He was the forerunner of Him Whom God shall make manifest (Baha'u'llah)."

Behold I am coming quickly! He who overcomes (prejudges) I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God. And I will write on him My New name. He who has an ear let him hear (spiritual ear). (Rev 3- 11 to 14) And the gentiles shall see Thy righteousness, and all kings shall see Thy glory: and Thou shall be called by a **new name**, which the mouth of Lord shall name.

"Isaiah 62-2 Isaiah 9:6, seeing far into the future wrote: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace....

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid (meaning peace in the world)." (Isaiah 9-6)

This was not supposed to happen during the first coming of Christ and it did not. As Christ mentions in the following verse, 'Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword.' (Matt 10:34) Then, I saw a new heaven and a new earth (New Revelation and new earth as a result of it); for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away (Christian era), and the sea was no more (reaching to the shore of peace and unity). And saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem (revealing of The most Holy Book by Baha'u'llah), coming down out of heaven from God, I heard a loud voice speaking from the throne:

God's home is with men! He will live with them; ...He will wipe away all tears from their eyes. There will be no more death (People shall be believers), no more grief, crying or pain (end of poverty, starvation and injustice). The old things have disappeared, then the one who sits on the throne said,' and now I made **all** things new.' Revelations 21:1-5

Here are a few selections from the Writings of The Bab and Baha'u'llah sent down from God.

"Be thou assured in thyself that verily, he who turns away from this Beauty* hath also turned away from the Messengers of the past and showeth pride towards God from all eternity to all eternity." *Baha'u'llah-From Tablet of Ahmad

Only now we can understand meaning of verse 33:2 in Deuteronomy. The Lord came from Sinai (Moses) and dawned from Seir upon us (Jesus); He shone from Mount Paran (Mohammed), He came forth with ten thousands of Saints (The Bab); From His right hand came a fiery law for them (Baha'u'llah). Believing only in the Old Testament is not enough when there is the New Testament.

Baha'is believe all major religions originated from the same God and were intended to lead mankind, and also the revelation of God is progressive and only the latest one can fulfil today's needs. We respect everybody's religious beliefs. The focus of this web page is not the opening of a door to conflict; rather, the aim is to declare the message of the new manifestation of God.

"Thus have their superstitions become veils between them and their own hearts and kept them from the path of God, the Exalted, the Great." (Baha'u'llah Tablet of Ahmad)

As Jesus told the Jews: "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: it is Moses who accuses you, on whom you set your hope. (John 5:45-6)

"Verily, Verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seethe the Father do." (John 5:19)

Saving of His followers by Jesus was limited to course of Jesuernational, a mo25 AD to 1844 AD (date of coming of Spirit of truth and Glory of the Lord). He commanded you "Seek I".... and ye shall find!" Matt

Jesus was Christ (Messiah), not only because the Old Testament says so, but because of His teachings and His Holy Spirit. In the same way, The Bab and Baha'u'llah are the second coming of the Son and the Father (in Spirit as the case of Elijah being John the Baptist).

A true seeker is he, one who searches without prejudice, has the courage, and prays to God for Guidance.

He kept His promise. Now is your turn to accept or reject His invitation to His latest Revelation.

In the end, Baha'is believes that only the Almighty God has the power to convert the hearts of people. "For many are called, but few are chosen." Matthew22:14

Share International's view on the second coming

The following quotations are taken from the Share International website.[50] It is a world-wide network of individuals and non-profit making groups whose purpose is to make known the fact that Maitreya (Jesus), the World Teacher for the coming age, and his group, the Masters of Wisdom, are now among us, emerging into the public arena, gradually, so as not to infringe human free will. They believe that Maitreya has already returned to the human world and has started to salvage mankind from disasters behind the scene.

Share International has sister sites world-wide in many languages; free materials are distributed around the world to the public and media by volunteers in many countries, and has Share International, a monthly magazine read in over 70 countries. Along with reports about the progress of Maitreya's emergence, it includes articles relevant to his priorities: realisation by humanity of our divine nature; a world at peace; restoration of the environment;

[50] http://share-international.org

sharing of the world's resources; and adequate and appropriate food, housing, healthcare and education for all people.

British futurist Benjamin Creme, is editor of Share International magazine and chairman of the Dutch/British Share International Foundation. He is the foremost spokesperson for this message, has for 27 years been preparing the way for Maitreya's emergence.

Many now expect the return of their awaited Teacher, whether they call him the Christ, Messiah, the fifth Buddha, Krishna, or the Imam Mahdi. Millions now know that the Teacher who fulfils all these expectations is already living among us. Maitreya, the World Teacher, has not come alone, but with a group of wise Teachers who have long guided humanity from behind the scenes.

They are returning to the everyday world to help us solve our most critical global problems. Maitreya is not a religious leader, but an educator in the broadest sense.

- He is here to inspire us to create a new era based on sharing and justice, so that all may have the basic necessities of life: food, shelter, health care, and education.
- His open mission in the world is about to begin. As Maitreya has said, 'Soon, now very soon, you will see my face and hear my words.'

In recent years, information about Maitreya's emergence has come primarily from Benjamin Creme, who has been speaking and writing about this event since 1974. A long list of Mairtreya's appearances including some photos taken by a reporter in Nairobi, Kenya on 11th June 1988 is published in the website.[51] According to Creme, Maitreya descended in July 1977 from his ancient retreat in the Himalayas and took up residence in the Indian-Pakistani community of London. He has been living and working there,

[51] http://www.share-international.org

seemingly as an ordinary man, his true status known to relatively few. Maitreya has been emerging gradually into full public view so as not to infringe humanity's free will.[52]

As a modern man concerned with today's problems, Maitreya has worked on many levels since 1977 to prepare humanity for his outward presence. From behind the scenes, the outpouring of his extraordinary energy has been the stimulus for dramatic changes on many fronts, including the fall of communism in the Soviet Union, the end of apartheid in South Africa, the rapprochement between East and West, the growing strength of the people's voice in many countries, and the world-wide focus on preserving the environment.

All the major religions expect a further revelation to be given by a future Teacher. Christians hope for the return of the Christ, the Buddhists look for the coming of another Buddha (the Lord Maitreya), while Muslims await the Imam Mahdi, the Hindus a reincarnation of Krishna, and the Jews the Messiah.

Students of the esoteric tradition know these as different names for the same individual Maitreya, the World Teacher and they look for his imminent return now, at the head of his group of Masters of Wisdom. They are people like us, who have gone before us in evolution and who have always guided and inspired humanity from behind the scenes.

Preferring to be known simply as the Teacher, Maitreya has not come as a religious leader, but as an educator in the broadest sense, pointing the way out of humanity's most critical problems. At this time of great political, economic, and social crisis, Maitreya will inspire humanity to see itself as one family, and create a civilisation

[52] Some Christians Sects also believe that Jesus has already comeback; thus the dispensation of the Gotama Sarsana is already in compromise. It is interesting to note the coincidence that the present Buddha once declared that His dispensation has been shortened to 500 years by the admission of female Bhikkhus to the Order, which He accepted it reluctantly after much persuasion by Ananda (His cousin and personal assistant) to accept His stepmother Gotami into the Order.

based on sharing, economic and social justice, and global co-operation. Maitreya does not intend to build a new religion around him nor to create followers, but to teach humanity "the art of Self-realization." The first steps are "honesty of mind, sincerity of spirit, and detachment." Maitreya's social concerns are reflected in his list of priorities: an adequate supply of the right food, adequate housing for all, healthcare and education as universal rights. His social message can be summarised in a few words: "Share and save the world." Maitreya knows we will accept his message and that we are on the threshold of an era of peace and goodwill.[53]

Second Coming of Maitreya according to Buddhist Sources

There are many theories regarding the time of Maitreya's descent. According to Getty (1914), Maitreya will be reborn as a Manusi (human) Buddha 5000 years after the birth of Sakyamuni Buddha, when the fifth world is created by the fifth Dhyani Bodhisattva Visvapani.

B. Bhattacharyya (1924) gives the period of 4000 years. Grunwedel (1901) gives a detailed account of the period, which occurs in between two Manusi Buddhas. According to him the doctrine of the current Buddha flourishes for a certain time followed by a decline; then it is overthrown by barbarians till a new deliverer appears and once more establishes the lost truths in all their purity. The period of the first law lasts 200 or 500 years from Sakyamuni's death; the second period of the 'law of images' lasts 1000 years; and the period of the 'last law' or declining religion lasts 3000 years, after which Maitreya renews the process. Thus, according to Grunwedel, Maitreya will come approximately 5000 years after Sakyamuni's nirvana.

A very different account is also available from Fa-hsien's pilgrimage reports and some other Chinese texts. Fa-hsien, who visited Ceylon

[53] http://share-international.org

in the fifth century AD, heard a story learnt from a local monk. It says that the lifespan of humans will increase in double ratio if each one practises faith and justice. At the time when human lifespan increases 80,000 years Maitreya will be born (Cakkavatti sihananda sutta). According to the Chinese scripture, Mi-lo Hsia-sheng Ching, people of Ketumati will live to become 84,000 years old, and they will never be greedy and jealous, and the land of Ketumati will be as flat as a mirror (Taisho Tripitaka). The Chinese traditional mathematical calculations predict the appearance of Maitreya as fifty seven hundred sixty million years after Sakyamuni's nirvana. [63]

Becoming a Bodhisatta[54]

A Buddha is a title given to an enlightened human teacher who rediscovered the lost wisdom of the four noble and unconditional truths with his own effort and without external help of any kind. He salvages all beings that have faith in him and follows his teachings to be liberated from all forms of suffering. To become a Buddha it takes literally, an eternity and has to be inspired and fulfilled the requirements, which the *Bodhisatta*, or the Buddha in making has to undertake many rebirths in different existences. Great *Bodhisattas* are of three types: [*Dasa-bodhisattuppatti katha*]

- those in whom wisdom (*pannadhika*) is predominant,
- those in whom faith *(saddhadhika)* is predominant, and,
- those in whom energy *(viriyadhika)* is predominant.

For the first type, the preparation requires four incalculable and one hundred thousand aeons. The second type works for eight incalculable and one hundred thousand aeons. The *Bodhisatta Metteyya* is the third type, those who work for sixteen incalculable and one hundred thousand aeons. These three types are also explained as being due to the degree of the quality of the energy

[54] *Quoted research paper on* "The Coming Buddha, AriyaMetteyya", Sayagyi U Chit Tin Ref.34 (http://ubakhin.com/)
[63] The Future Buddha Maitreya, An Iconological study. Kim, Inchang 1997

they put forth, or again, as being determined by the degree they develop the mental factors, which bring emancipation to maturity *(vimutti paripacaniya dhamma).* There are eight qualifications for the man who is to become a Great *Bodhisatta.*

1) He must be a human being *(manu satta),* as this is the plane in which Buddhas arise. This is the plane in which beings can have the three root causes of being free of greed, hatred, and confusion.

2) He must be a male *(lingasampatti)*, for only a man can become a Buddha.

3) He must have achieved the necessary conditions supporting Buddha-hood, in other words, the cause *(hetu),* which means that at the time of the aspiration he was prepared to attain Arahatship.

4) He must look for the Teacher *(sattharadassana),* as the aspiration can only be successful if made in the presence of a living Buddha. Only a Teaching Buddha can see the capability of the person making the aspiration and what will work out in the future.

5) He must have gone forth *(pabbajja)* either as a *bhikkhu* or as an 'ascetic' who believes in the doctrines of volitional actions and the moral effectiveness of action.

6) He must have achieved the noble qualities *(gunasampatti)*, which come with highly developed control over the mind. Only then will he be able to investigate the ten perfections that he will need to develop.

7) He must possess great dedication *(adhikara).* He will be so devoted he would give his life for a Buddha.

8) And he must have a strong desire *(chandata),* a wholesome desire, if he is to develop the mental factors, which make for Buddhahood.

The aspiration has one of four conditions *(paccaya):*

- He is inspired because he sees a Teaching Buddha,
- He hears of the great power of a Teaching Buddha,
- He hears the Doctrine of a Teaching Buddha being taught and the powers of a Buddha explained,
- He is a man of lofty temperament and noble disposition. *Bodhisatta Metteyya* comes under the second condition, as we shall see.

The aspiration has four causes *(hetu):*

a) The Great *Bodhisatta* has already fulfilled his duties under former *Buddhas* and acquired the supporting conditions *(upanissaya)* for fulfilling his task. These supporting conditions create a clear distinction between the Great *Bodhisatta* and the beings intent on becoming awakened as disciples or *Pacceka Buddhas*.

b) The Great *Bodhisatta*s are endowed with lucid faculties and lucid knowledge, while the others do not. He practices for the welfare and happiness of many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of Devas and men. The others practice mainly for their own welfare. He applies skilfulness to his practice through his ability to create opportunities to benefit others and through his skill in distinguishing what is and what is not possible.

c) He is by nature compassionate, ready to give his own body and life to alleviate the suffering of others. He is willing to struggle and strive for a long time, despite the great hardships he will encounter. He relies on good friends who restrain him from evil and establish him in what is good.

d) Finally, the aspiration is based on four powers *(bala);*

   - internal power (*ajjhattika-bala*),

- external power (*bahira-bala*),
- the power of the supporting conditions (*upanissaya-bala*), and
- the power of effort (*payoga-bala*).

The internal power is the longing or undeviating inclination for supreme Awakening based on his personal ideals and reverence for the Dhamma. The external power is this same longing based on consideration of others. Through developing the supporting conditions, he has the power of this longing. And the power of effort means he is endowed with the appropriate effort for attaining supreme Awakening. His effort will be thorough and he will persevere in his work.

The Great *Bodhisattas* are confirmed in their aspiration by many Buddhas. A sixteenth-century *Pali* text from Thailand [*Suttanta No. 142 (MLS, III 300-305)*] said that *Bodhisatta Metteyya* received his prediction of future Buddhahood from Buddha *Mahutta*. This would presumably be the first prediction for him. This text also gives details of the period during which the *Bodhisatta* who became *Buddha Gotama* made a mental resolve to become a Teaching *Buddha*. This is shown to be his preparation for the life in which he received his first sure prediction. *Bodhisatta Metteyya* is mentioned as being associated with him in two of these lives: as his leading disciple when he was a religious teacher and as his chaplain (named *Sirigutta*) when he was King *Atideva*.

During the time of *Buddha Gotama*, the Great *Bodhisatta* who is to be the next *Buddha* was a *bhikkhu* named *Ajita*. [*The Path of Purification,* Chapter I, 135] According to the commentary on the *Anagatavamsa*, *Ajita* was the son of King *Ajatasattu* and Queen *KaÒcanadevi*. Prince *Ajita* had five hundred attendants, and when he reached the age of sixteen, the king asked his son to inherit the Buddha's heritage. The Prince agreed, so the king took him to the *Veluvana* Monastery in *Rajagaha* (present day - Rajgir, Bihar) in great pomp and splendour along with his five hundred attendants. Prince *Ajita* was ordained as a novice, and because of his serenity, calmness, and wisdom, he was much respected. Later he was

ordained as a *bhikkhu*. The Buddha took him when he went from *Rajagaha* to *Kapilavatthu* to reside in the *Nigrodharama* Monastery.

While they were residing at that monastery, *Mahapajapati-Gotame* came one day with two special cloths to be presented to the Buddha for use as robes. She had planted the cotton seeds herself and did all the necessary work up to the time the robes were finished. The account of the gift of the cloths is found in the *Majjhima-nikaya*. There, the Buddha refused three times to accept the robes offered by *Mahaapajapati-Gotame* and suggested that she should offer them to the *SaÑgha* with the Buddha at its head. Venerable Ananda approached the Buddha, suggesting he should accept the cloths. The Buddha then gave the discourse on the analysis of offerings.

No other details are given in the *Pali* canon or Buddha*ghosa*'s commentary on this discourse. In the commentary on the *Anagatavamsa*, it was said that the Buddha accepted one robe for himself and instructed his stepmother to offer the second one to the *Samgha*. But, not one of the eighty leading disciples came forward to accept that robe. Eventually, Venerable *Ajita* thought to himself that the Buddha had told his stepmother to give the robe to the *Samgha* for her benefit, so he bravely got up like a king of the lions in the midst of the *Samgha* and accepted the robe. There was some disappointment and much talk about how an unknown *Bhikkhu* could accept the robe, when none of the leading disciples had taken it. Realizing the situation and in order to dispel any doubts, the Buddha said, "Do not say this *Bhikkhu* as an ordinary *Bhikkhu*. He is a *Bodhisatta* who will be the coming Buddha *Metteyya*."

Then, the Buddha took the bowl, which had been given to him shortly after his Awakening by the world's four Guardian *devas* (*satulokapaladeva*), and threw it into the air. None of the eighty leading disciples could retrieve it, but Venerable (Ven.) *Ajita* understood that the Buddha intended for him to show his psychic powers, so he brought back the bowl. Then, Ven. *Ajita* took the cloth he had accepted and put it in the Buddha's Perfumed Chamber, as a canopy under the ceiling, making the aspiration that this act of generosity might result in his having a canopy made of

seven gems and with hangings made of gold, silver, coral, and pearls measuring twelve leagues, when he becomes a Buddha. The Buddha smiled after this and Ven. *Ananda* asked why he had smiled. The Buddha replied, "*Ananda, the Bhikkhu Ajita* will become the Buddha *Ari-metteyya* in this auspicious aeon."

Then, he remained silent, enjoying the fruits of Arahatship. The first chief disciple, Venerable *Sariputta*, who knew the assembled *Bhikkhus* wished to hear more information, requested the Buddha give a discourse about the coming Buddha. And the Buddha gave the account in the *Anagatavamsa*.

In another *Pali* text that is not part of the canon, there is a description of *Metteyya* in the *Tusita* world. He is said to go to the *Culamani* shrine in the *Tavatimsa Deva* world to pay respects to the hair cut off by the *Bodhisatta Siddhattha*, when he made the great renunciation and to relics brought there by the *Deva* King *Sakka* after the death of Buddha *Gotama*. The *Bodhisatta Metteyya* is described as being surrounded by a host of *devas* and *devis*. Four *devi* maidens in particular are described as having beautiful complexions, halos, ornaments, and clothes, one of a shining colour, one red, one dark gold, and the fourth, golden.

The main point of this text is that beings who wish to encounter the coming Buddha *a*nd attain Awakening under him should act accordingly. *Bhikkhu*s should not create a schism in the *Samgha*.

The five heinous actions, which inevitably lead to rebirth in the lower worlds, should be avoided. In addition to not creating a schism, these include not killing one's father, one's mother, or an Arahat. The fifth point, not drawing the blood of a Buddha*,* of course, is no longer possible. Other actions to be avoided are destroying pagodas (*thupa*s) or breaking *Bodhi* trees. *Bodhisatta*s should not be killed. One should not be stingy or tell lies.

In one of the texts about Buddha *Gotama*'s description of the ten future Buddhas, the following positive actions are said to be necessary if those who encounter this Buddha *Dispensation* wish to meet Buddha *Metteyya*: they must give gifts (*dana*), observe

morality (*sila*), and develop mental control - that is to say, meditation (*bhavana*).

Chapter 2
Study Hypothesis

The Study Objective

It is our interest to test the hypothesis whether Jesus could be the *Bodhisatta Metteyya*. There are three questions in particular that we want to ask ourselves, although it is almost certain that Jesus has preached some of the Buddha's teachings.

Question 1: Has Jesus learnt Buddhist philosophy?

Question 2: Is Jesus a *Bodhisatta?*

Question 3: Is Jesus and *Metteyya*, the same person?

Has Jesus learnt Buddhist philosophy?

Theoretically, everyone can become a *bodhisatta* if enough effort and determination is present. A *bodhisatta* does not necessarily have to be a Buddhist in his previous life(s) before he becomes a Buddha himself. There are many similarities between the teachings of Jesus and the Buddha *Gotama*, as already stated in previous Chapter.

Is Jesus a Bodhisatta?

Jesus' commitment to sacrifice his own life in order to save others is a point to consider if he could be a *bodhisatta.* He has an immense love for all people and has a passion to salvage mankind, although the opinion on how he would do it may differ in different faiths. His life and his efforts may be compatible to that of a *bodhisatta* and his prediction of his second coming to this human world to save mankind is a point to consider as Buddhas have to be humans.

Is Jesus and Metteyya, the same person?

There are reasons to believe this assertion of Jesus as *Metteyya* in *Pali* or *Maitreya* in Sanskrit, namely; the second coming of Jesus and the appearance of *Metteyya* before this world ends is a strong coincidence. Jesus is believed to be in Heaven at present and *Metteyya* is also in *Tusita* (*Tushita* in Sanskrit), one of the eight heavens where *bodhisatta*s usually reside if they are reborn as *devas*, awaiting his final life as a Buddha is another coincidence.

When Jesus was born, he was said to have come from heaven, which is also another coincidence when we consider a known fact that *Ajita* was reborn as a *Deva* in *Tusita* after his last known existence as a human during the time of *Gotama* Buddha. Normally, the life span of a *Deva* is very long, but they can voluntarily opt to die from heavens to take rebirth in the human world should they need to undertake further perfections for their goal. Jesus has a determination to become a saviour, which may be of an equal calibre to that of a *bodhisatta.* It is well known that the *Bodhisatta Metteyya* will use the cultivation of loving-kindness (*mettabhavana*) as the vehicle to his enlightenment, which is also peculiarly similar to Jesus' practice of universal loving kindness and compassion, a contradictory practice to the advice of the God according to the Mosaic Law.

The Hypothesis

In research, we usually analyze data to disprove first, that there is a difference between the two comparable data. It is called the Null hypothesis, just like in the criminal law, that a person is not guilty until and unless proved otherwise.

Jesus and *Metteyya* are both *bodhisatta*s

In this context we shall try to prove first that the two variables, Jesus and *Metteyya*, are comparably similar that they could be both termed as the *bodhisatta*s. To prove this, we will have to find evidence on Jesus that he has the qualities of a *Bodhisatta.*

Jesus and *Metteyya* as different persons,

The Null Hypothesis

We put forward the Null Hypothesis of this research as 'Jesus and *Metteyya* are different persons appearing on the earth at different periods.' We shall try to disprove the Null Hypothesis by finding evidence on *Metteyya* that describes him to be in *Tusita* only after Jesus' appearance on earth. If we can find the evidence the Null Hypothesis will be nullified; if the evidence predates Jesus' period on earth then, Jesus could not be the *Bodhisatta Metteyya* since he appeared on earth when the *Bodhisatta* was already in *Tusita*.

Analysis on the evidence

If the evidence is based upon a *sutta* or it's commentary that was made during the lifetime of *Gotama* Buddha, the Null hypothesis can be taken with a hundred percent certainty to our investigation.

Jesus was born approximately 500 years after *Gotama* Buddha and if there is any evidence that would lead to the fact that the *Bodhisatta Metteyya* is in the *Tusita* in his last existence only after Jesus' appearance on the earth, the Null hypothesis will be nullified.

The Methodology

Search for Evidence

To prove or disprove this hypothesis the only methodology in this research is to find the evidence in the literature, and to ascertain how authentic the source is, and when it was published, or made it known to the Order or to the followers of a certain faith.

Literature Search

We have used Google search in surfing the Internet for literature source using Jesus, *Metteyya (Pali)* and *Maitreya* /*Mettreyya* (*Sanskrit)* as the search words. We have also approached learned Theravada *Bhikkhu*s either for the literature source or for a lead to the evidence.

Results

Number of Websites visited

There are enormous amount of literature on the subject of *Metteyya*, *Maitreya*, and Jesus. The search using *Metteyya* as the key word produced 1640 documents; *Maitreya* alone has produced 141,000 documents; *Metteyya* and Jesus have only produced 367; but *Maitreya* and Jesus have produced 15,100 documents; and Jesus and Tibet have produced 80,900 documents. In total, we have examined thirty websites, out of which, over ten websites have mentioned Jesus as either *Maitreya* or *Metteyya*.

Evidence on future Metteyya during Gotama Buddha's time

Many websites have published the prophecy of *Ajita*, *Maitreya/ Mettreyya or Metteyya* to be the future Buddha, the fifth and the last to appear in this *Bhadda-kappa*. Almost all websites have mentioned an account of a young novice who came forward to accept a spare robe of the two that were offered to the Buddha. The audience was taken aback by the brave behaviour of *Ajita* when the rest of the Order of the monks were reluctant. The Buddha revealed to the audience that he was the prospective *Metteyya,* who would become the next Buddha one day. This account, however, did not

mention a word or a hint on *Ajita* as the last life as a human before he waited in *Tusita* for the appropriate time.

This account comes from both the *Pali* and Sanskrit scriptures, which are direct words of *Gotama* Buddha and can be taken for granted as authentic. This evidence will support the view that *Metteyya* was not already in *Tusita* at the time of the Buddha. However, it will not support the theory nor will it nullify completely the hypothesis that we have put forward. We will have to make further enquiries regarding:

1) When is it known to us that *Metteyya* is in *Tusita* in his last existence before becoming the Buddha?

2) Who gave that statement and how authentic is it?

3) How reliable was that person who gave the statement?

So far, we have neither proved nor disproved the hypothesis that Jesus or *Metteyya* is the same person. Nevertheless, the evidence available has led us to believe that there is a possibility for Jesus as the *Metteyya*, but there are still sequential questions that need answering. The sources that have mentioned *Metteyya or Maitreya* in his last existence in *Tusita* come from both Theravada and Mahayana literature. However, the date of these sources is hard to track down as they appeared to be originated from verbal revelations of Arahats or those who had attained the extra-sensory perceptions (*abhinna*) to obtain information, such as the divine eye, the divine ear, telepathy, clairvoyance etc. Although it is impossible to ascertain the exact date, we have a circumstantial evidence that the information has originated together with the emergence of the Mahayana sect and the Sanskrit literature. At the time of the first Buddhist Council around 479 BC, when the *Pali* canons were compiled and verified, the information had not yet emerged. So, we can safely regard that it has not been revealed before the Jesus period. The only hint that we could gather regarding the date came from Mahayana sources which could be during the first century AD the earliest, but most likely to be in the third century AD when the Sanskrit the main language used in Mahayana literature had evolved.

Information from personal sources

We have learnt from the Theravada *bhikkhu*s that it is traditional for a prospective Buddha to come from *Tusita*, which is the last abode for *bodhisatta*s. But, we do not know from which source does the statement that *Metteyya* is presently awaiting in *Tusita* has originated. We also noted that a *Bodhisatta* can be reborn in *Tusita* not only once, but in many times before the last existence as a *Bodhisatta* Deva. We have been given a lead as to where we should look for the evidence. Venerable Dr Uttaranyana, the Chief Abbott of the Birmingham Buddhist Vihara in the UK, has suggested two sources, the *Anagatavamsa* and the *Dasa-bodhisattuppatti-katha*.

In addition, Venerable Dr Dhammasami, the Chief Abbott of the Oxford Buddhist Vihara, UK, has suggested us to check the *Asoka* rock inscriptions, for any evidence as they are well established before the time of Jesus on earth and would be useful to disprove the Null hypothesis. We have asked help from scholars who can explore the original *Pali* texts as well as scholars that have a wide knowledge on *Mahayana* Buddhism and the Sanskrit literature. The Mahayanists are regarded to be more nearer to Christianity as the two faiths have similarities and developed more or less during the same era and from the locality that had contacts between the two religions.

Literature Review on the Evidence

Since the methodology of our research is based upon the availability of the information after doing the search and research, a review on the literature regarding the hypothesis may be an appropriate approach before discussing on the results.

Who is Metteyya?

Could Buddhaghosa be the Bodhisatta Metteyya?

If we assume that *Bodhisatta Metteyya*'s last human life before attaining Buddhahood is during a Buddha's Dispensation, he would

be able to give the gift of the Dhamma, unlike *Vessantara* who lived outside such a period.[55] Buddh*aghosa* has indeed given a great gift of the *Dhamma* by his commentaries. When Buddha*ghosa* went from India to Sri Lanka (Ceylon) to consult the commentaries on the *Pali* canon, he was given two verses to comment on as a test. The result was the *Visuddhimagga* (The Path of Purification). The Devas, in order to convince the people of his greatness, hid the text twice so that Buddha*ghosa* had to copy it twice. When the copies were compared with the original, no deviations were found. The *Samgha* then exclaimed, "Without a doubt, this is *Metteyya*!"

The *Visuddhimagga* is especially important for those practicing the Buddha's Teachings. Sayagyi U Ba Khin, meditation teacher, the International Meditation Centre, Yangon, Myanmar, considered this work the most important single work explaining true Buddhist meditation. However, we found that Buddha*ghosa* has made an aspiration to be reborn in *Tusita* and to be a disciple of *Metteyya* in his last existence. Sri Lankan (Sinhalese) version of the *Visuddhimagga* ended with a poem in which the writer aspires to the rebirth in the *Tusita* Deva world, and then, to the final liberation under Buddha *Metteyya*. Ven. *Saddhatissa* attributes these verses to Buddha*ghosa*, but they seem to be written by a copyist. Another aspiration to encounter Buddha *Metteyya* is found at the end of another Sinhalese manuscript of Buddha*ghosa*'s *Atthasalina.*

We may temporarily exclude the possibility of Buddha*ghosa* as the *Metteyya* based upon this information, until we have definite proof that the aspiration was inserted by a copyist instead of Buddha*ghosa* himself.

Is Pu Tai, the Laughing Buddha, the Bodhisatta Metteyya?

There is also a belief in Buddhists and Taoists in China that "Pu Tai" – the Laughing Buddha - an image of a sitting monk with a protruding tummy and images of small children over his shoulders and all over his body - is thought to be a reincarnation of

[55] U Chit Tin, *op cit*

Metteyya.[56] Because of this special appearance, many people choose to call him 'The Laughing Buddha'. Such a depiction by his Chinese devotees is a far cry from what Buddhists of other lands imagined him to be, but this does not mean that the Chinese do not revere him as much as others do. This portraiture of him came about, as a result of one of his memorable emanations in China during the end of the Tang period and the beginning of the Wu-Tai Dynasty (907-1060).

There was a learned monk whom everyone addressed as "Pu Tai" - meaning the 'Cloth Bag', as he was always seen carrying a large hemp-bag wherever he went. He was a native of the *Chekiang* Province who went about propagating the Buddha Dhamma. No one really knew his true name although he had called himself '*Chi Tze*', and because of his bag, the people preferred to refer to him as '*the monk with the sack*'. Here he appeared as one who is extremely kind, jovial and helpful and although he had no home or temple, which he could call his own, he was always in a cheerful mood. He wandered about here and there to beg for food, giving advice and teaching to those who cared to hear him, or he could be seen collecting all kinds of things which he would put into his bag. To the worldly ones this act may be reckoned as an act of greed but it really meant that he was ever seeking to help deliver beings into his Pure Land.

As the people got to know him better they soon discovered that he was also extremely good at reading their fortune and predicting the weather. Even by his daily actions, they were able to guess the outcome of the weather conditions for whenever he was seen hurrying around in wet sandals, rain was sure to follow, and whenever he was seen wearing shoes and relaxing here and there, bright and sunny days would prevail. He also had many other peculiarities some of which bore similarities with those of another famous monk 'Chi Kung' of the Sung Dynasty. "Pu Tai" was often

[56] Pu Tai; *Buddhist studies* - Ref.35 http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/history/maitreya-txt.htm

seen to be sleeping very comfortably on the snow during the cold winters and resisted taking a bath during the hot summers. He died in a sitting posture at the corridor of a temple and left behind a verse, which said: "*Maitreya /Mettreyya* is a real *Maitreya /Mettreyya*, who manifests uncountable transformed bodies. Constantly he manifests before living beings that are not able to recognize them!" Through this verse, people later began to accept him as an incarnation of the *Maitreya /Metteyya* Buddha, which also explains the accepted appearance of the current day's depiction of him. There is no other evidence on "*Pu Tai*" as the *Metteyya* apart from this information, which is not substantial enough to regard him as the *Metteyya*.[57]

The Evidence on *Metteyya* in *Tusita*

Theravada Sources

The only piece of evidence that we can find in the Theravada texts, regarding the last existence of the *Bodhisata Metteyya*, is in the *Mahavamsa*, the Great Chronicle of Sri Lanka, dated from 6th century BC to 4th century AD. The *Bodhisatta Metteyya*, waiting in the *Tusita* heaven until his return to earth, is worshipped in Sri Lanka since ancient times (*Mahavamsa (xxxii 73*). The Great Chronicle was translated from *Pali* by Wilhelm Geiger. It describes a lot of accounts of the Buddha's period as well as that of the post Buddha era. Therefore, it is not easy to ascertain if that quotation was described before Jesus' period as it also contains information dating from the 6th century BC, as well as to the 4th century AD.[58]

The *Cakkavatti Sutta* (D III 76), a *Pali* canon gives a short account of the life of the Buddha *Metteyya*. According to this account, he will be born in the city of *Ketumata* (present day Varanasi, India), when humans beings come to live 80,000 years.

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[57] (http://*www.Buddhanet/e-learning/history/Maitreya(Mettreyya)- txt.htm*)

[58] *Mahavamsa*, the Great Chronicle of Lanka from 6th century BC to 4th century AD, translated from *Pali* by Wilhelm Geiger, †(W. Geiger & Mabel H. Bode, 1912, PTS) Ref.36 (http://www.palikanon.com/index.html)

There is no statement regarding the last existence of the *Bodhisatta* as a *Deva* in *Tusita*.[59]

Buddhaghosa also said, "There will be Buddha *Metteyya* in the future. His father will be the *Brahmana Subrahma*. His mother will be the *Brahmani Brahmavata.*" (*Visuddhimagga* 434; *Atthasalina* 415) This is a commentary written in the post Jesus period. A copious account of *Metteyya* appears in the *Anagatavamsa*[60] written by *Kassapa* of *Cola* (*Ganthavamsa* p6) is based on an unknown early work. The *Anagatavamsa* gives *Metteya*'s family name as *Ajita*. It is also mentioned in the *Dasabodhi-sattuppattikatha,* which could be written somewhere in the latter part of the 14th century AD, when Buddhism was in decline stage in India. In one of the manuscripts of the *Anagatavamsa* discovered by *Professor J Minayeff*, it was mentioned that Prince *Ajita* was a son of *Ajatasattu* (Journal of the Pali Text Society JPTS, 1886, p 34).

Ajatasattu had a son called *Udayabhadda* who killed his father, but *Ajita* was not mentioned in any other manuscript except this particular *Anagatavamsa* version, which the Professor had quoted (*Samantabhaddika* - a commentary on the *Anagatavamsa*). The story goes on as follows: It is the answer of the Buddha to *Sariputta*'s question on "The Lineage of the Buddhas" pronounced at the city of *Kapilavatthu*. It was about the Elder *Ajita* who accepted one length of cloth out of the two brought to the Buddha by *Mahapajapati Gotame* who had woven them herself. Then the talk arose among the monks as to why the Buddha asked *Mahapajapati* to offer one length of the cloth to *Ajita*, the youngest of all *thera*s (Elder Monks). The Buddha prophesied that he was not an ordinary person, but a prospective Buddha named *Metteyya* in this auspicious aeon. (*Anagatavamsa Desana*) The *Anagatavamsa* is thought to be written by the author of the *Mohavicchedana,*

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[59] The Birth stories of the Ten Bodhisatta and the *Dasabodhisattuppattikatha* (DBK) by H. Sasshatissa, M.A., Ph.D. *Pali* Text Society ISBN 07100 8131 6. Ref.37

[60] *Anagatavamsa Desana* – by Udaya Meddegama, Translation by John Clifford & *Anagatavamsa Mula Kyan Sar* – (Myanmar version) Ref.38

Kassapa (1160-1230 AD). The information does not mention about the last existence of *Metteyya* as a Deva in *Tusita*.

Another version, in biography of *Sri Saddhammavavada Sangrahaya*, a Sri Lankan document written by *Sri Saddartha* Buddha*raksita Mahathera,* stated that *Ajita* was reborn as a son of a rich householder named *Sirivaahana* after having disappeared from the *Deva* world at the city of *Sa~kassa*, thirty *yojana*s from *Savatthi*. *Ajita* when come of age decided to renounce his home, wealth, and his relatives to receive the higher ordination after hearing a dialogue between *Sariputta* and the Buddha, and made a resolution to become a Buddha. He then learnt the whole Buddhist canon (*Tipitaka*) and taught it to many hundreds of monks. It has not mentioned that it was his last existence in fulfilling his perfections. This work is evidently written in the post Jesus period.[61]

Dhatusena (455-473 AD) adorned an image of *Metteyya* with the complete attire of a king and appointed a guard for him within the radius of a *yojana* (*Culavamsa* xxxvii 68). *Dappula* I (659 AD) made a statue of the *Bodhisatta,* fifteen cubits high (*Culavamsa* xiv 62). From these sources, it can be postulated that *Metteyya* is already in *Tusita* since those periods. The first part of *Mahavamsa* was written in the 6th century AD by King *Dhatusena's* brother, the Venerable *Thera Mahanama*.

It is believed that *Metteyya* preaches *Abhidhamma* before the assembly of the gods. *Kassapa V (914-923 AC)* revealed this fact to the world by reciting the *Abhidhamma* with the grace of a Buddha in a perfectly equipped *vihara*, sitting in a *mandapa* decorated with jewels, surrounded by all the *bhikkhu*s (*Culavamsa* iii 47-49). The *Culavamsa* was written in the thirteenth century work composed by *Bhikkhu Dhammakitti* in *Pali*. [62]

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[61] The Birth stories of the Ten Bodhisatta and the *Dasabodhisattuppattikatha* (DBK) by H. Sasshatissa, *op cit*

[62] *Culavamsa* the More Recent Part of the *Mahavamsa* /Translated by Wilhelm Geiger. Translated from the German, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1996, 2 parts in one, ISBN 81-208-1300-6 Ref.39

There is also a story in the *Rasavahini* of *Cullagalla upasaka*. In Ceylon, near the *Jajjara* River there was a great *vihara* frequented by many devotees, where many thousand *bhikkhu*s lived including Ven. *Maliyadeva*. *Cullagalla upasaka* was the principal supporter of this *vihara*. When Ven. *Maliyadeva* fell ill one day the *upasaka* made him a special gruel made of eleven ingredients. They had a talk about *Culamani Cetiya* in the heaven of the Thirty-three (*Tavatimsa*), while the gruel was prepared and later the *bhikkhu* offered him to take a trip to the *Cetiya*. Ven. *Maliyadeva* by his power took all the assembled *thera*s and *bhikkhu*s and the *upasaka* to the heaven of Thirty-three, where they waited at the seventh golden gate. At that time, the *Bodhisatta Metteyya* with his assembly arrived from the *Tusita* heaven to worship the *Culamani Cetiya*. Ven. *Malayadeva* introduced the *upasaka* to the *Bodhisatta*, and because of the *upasaka*'s *saddha* (confidence) and *sila* (morality), the *Bodhisatta* offered him two pieces of divine cloth, which were presented as the evidence when they returned to the human world. It was recognized in Sri Lanka that the last saint was the Ven. *Maliyadeva Maha ahathanwahanse* known by oral tradition. No date was available when he attained the sainthood. There was no date given on the story and it is difficult to trace when the story was originated, but most likely to be originated from a folklore in the post Jesus period.

In another *Pali* text that is not part of the canon, there is a description of *Metteyya* in the *Tusita* world.[63] [See Dbk, pp. 42f] He is said to go to the *Culamani* shrine in the *Tavatimsa Deva* world to pay respects to the hair cut off by the *Bodhisatta Siddhattha* when he made the great renunciation and to relics brought there by the *Deva King Sakka* after the death of Buddha Gotama. The Bodhisatta Metteyya is described as being surrounded by a host of Devas and Devis. [64]

Mahayana scriptures

[63] St. Louis De Montfort (***http://www.mariedenazareth.com/ 1.0.html***)
[64] The Coming Buddha, Ari-Metteyya: Sayagyi U Chit Tin op cit *http://ubakhin.com/*

As a Bodhisattva, Maitreya (Metteyya) (in Sanskrit) appears in many sutras. In the Larger *Sukhavata* Vyuha,[65] he is shown as the Amitabha by Sakyamuni Buddha. In this sutra, Maitreya (Metteyya) is called by one of his other names, Ajita (unconquered). He also appears in the Gandhavyuha sutra.[66]

According to the tradition, Maitreya *(Metteyya)* is also the author of some commentarial work, known as the Five Books of *Maitreya (Metteyya)*. These include *Abhisamaylankara*, a brilliant summary of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* in 25,000 lines. Modern scholars attributed these five works to *Asanga* or *Maitreya (Metteyya)-natha.* However, there's no reason in principle, though, why the writer should not have been directly inspired by *Maitreya (Metteyya)* to compose these works.

Asanga (also called Aryasanga), born around 300 CE, was an exponent of the yogācāra school of Buddhist philosophy and regarded as the founder of the Tantrayana doctrine. Traditionally, he and his half-brother Vasubandhu are regarded as the founders of this school.

Born the son of a Kshatriya father in Puruspura (Peshawar) in northern western India, Asanga was perhaps originally a member of the Mahīśāsaka or the Mūlasarvāstivāda school but later converted to Mahāyāna; after many years of intense meditation, during which time some traditions say that he often visited Tushita Heaven to receive teachings from Maitreya-nātha. He went on to write many of the key Yogācāra treatises such as the Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra, the Mahāyāna-samgraha and the Abhidharma-samuccaya (refer Abhidharma) as well as other works, although there are discrepancies between the Chinese and Tibetan traditions concerning which works are attributed to him and which to Maitreya-nātha.

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[65] John D. Turner; *http://www.gnosis.org/naghamm/nhl.html* op cit

[66] Buddhist *Mahayana* Texts - Translated by E. B. Cowell, F. Max Müller and J.Takakusu - Oxford, the Clarendon Press - [1894] Vol. XLIX of The Sacred Books of the East Ref.40

Tradition has that through deep meditation *Asanga* had a vision of the *Tushita* (*Tusita*) *deva loka* during which he received from *Maitreya (Metteyya)* the teachings contained in the Five Books. *Asanga* had been experiencing difficulty in gaining and unmistaken understanding of the *Perfection of Wisdom* sutras and decided that only from *Maitreya (Metteyya)* could he receive the instructions he needed. He therefore entered into intensive retreat in hopes of gaining a direct vision of this Buddha.[67]

After three years of intensive retreat with no success he quit this retreat. On his way back home he saw an old man trying to remove a huge stone by brushing it with a feather. *Asanga* took this as a sign that with enthusiastic perseverance, anything could be accomplished, so he re-entered his retreat. More years passed, without results. But each time *Asanga* gave up, he would encounter someone doing an impossible task, and thus he would be re-inspired again. But after 12 years with no results, *Asanga* gave up his practice for good. This time on his way home, he saw a starving dog on the ground, its wounds being eaten by maggots. Moved by compassion for the dog and maggots, he cut off a piece of his own flesh and bent down to transfer the maggots to the meat with his tongue so he would not hurt the maggots. He closed his eyes, but although he leaned over very far, he felt nothing. When he opened his eyes to see what was wrong, the dog had disappeared and in its place stood *Metteyya* in all his glory. *Asanga* was shocked and asked: “Where were you all those years I was meditating in the cave?” *Metteyya* replied that he had been there next to him all that time and only delusions had prevented *Asanga* from seeing him. *Asanga*’s compassionate act removed the veil of those delusions.

Mettreyya took *Asanga* and transported him to *Tusita*. They spent the morning there, during which *Asanga* received detailed

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[67] *Maitreya* Prophecy *Death, After life and Eschatology, Messianic Prophecies,* Ref.41 *http://alexm.here.ru : 8081/ mirrors/www.enteract.com/jwalz/Eliade/192.html*

[63] *Inchang Kim (1997). The Future Buddha Maitreya, an Iconological study ISBN 81-246-0082-1*

instructions from *Mettreyya* on the Perfection of Wisdom sutras in the form of five texts. These are:

- Ornament of Realizations,
- Ornament of Universal Vehicle Scriptures,
- Analysis of the Jewel Matrix, or Peerless Continuum (Uttaratantra),
- Discrimination between Centre and Extremes, and
- Discrimination between Phenomenon and Noumenon.

These Mahayana texts (Ref. 26-34) are thought to have been written in the post Jesus period by scholars. There were few scholars like Asanga who had said to have met Maitreya in Tusita Heaven to seek help solving religious doubts; viz. Devabodhisattva and Nagarjuna, and Bhavaviveka.
Devabodhisattva was the fourteenth patriarch of Buddhism and a disciple of **Nagarjuna** who lived around the first and second century. (Lancaster 1975) Hsuan-tsang, the Chinese pilgrim who visited India around AD 629-637 wrote about an arahat called Uttara, who lived in the Cola country consulting Maitreya in his Tusita Heaven by using his divine faculties whenever he found difficulties in answering Devabodhisattva's questions.

Bhavaviveka or **Bhavya** c. 500–c. 578, was the founder of the Svatantrika tradition of the Madhyamaka school of Buddhism. In the lineage of the Tibetan Panchen Lamas there were considered to be four Indian and three Tibetan incarnations of Amitabha Buddha before Khedrup Gelek Pelzang, who is recognised as the 1st Panchen Lama. The lineage starts with Subhuti, one of the original disciples of Gautama Buddha. Bhavaviveka is considered to be the third Indian incarnation of Amitabha Buddha in this line. Bhavaviveka, the master of sastras was widely renowned for his elegant scholarship, acknowledged Maitreya as the source of knowledge, and awaits Maitreya's return to earth to listen to his discourse after his enlightenment in asura's palace in the mountain of Dhanakatala. (Ibid., II, p.225)

The ***Lalitavistara Sutra*** (English: *Extensive Sport Sutra*) is a Mahayana Buddhist Vaipulya sutra that describes the sports (*lila*) of Gautama Buddha. It is a compilation of various works by no single author and includes some material from the Sarvastivada school. The scholar P. L. Vaidya dates the finished Sanskrit text to the third century. Lalitavistara, the oldest parts of which may be assigned to the third century BC and its final redaction to the sixth century AD, mentions Maitreya Buddha as the leader of thirty two thousand Buddhas in the Tusita realm.

Sources from published literature by scholars

Maitreya is presently in Tusita realm, not only abiding the next birth, but ruling over the thirty-two thousand Buddhas (bodhisattas) who have all obtained complete perfection. He has but one birth left to attain enlightenment. (Ibid., p2)

The concept of Tusita realm as paradise was described by B. Suziki (1949) where he wrote that the three Buddhist paradises at the time of Nagarjuna were Tusita heaven of Maitreya, Abhirati of Aksobhya, and Sukhavati of Amitabha. According to J. Legge, the Tusita is the fourth devaloka, where all the Bodhisattvas are reborn before the final appearance on the earth (J. Legge 1981).

Iconological Study

To obtain much concrete evidence on the date of Bodhisatta Metteya's residence in Tusita Heaven as his last existence prior to becoming a Buddha, we turned to iconological study, despite knowing that Buddhist iconography started only after Alexandra's conquest of Asia. Nevertheless, it may be good enough to verify the Null hypothesis if any evidence dated prior to Jesus' period is available.
The origins of Greco-Buddhist art are to be found in the Hellenistic Greco-Bactrian kingdom (250 BCE- 130 BCE), located in today's Afghanistan, from which Hellenistic culture radiated into the Indian subcontinent with the establishment of the Indo-Greek kingdom (180 BCE-10 BCE). Under the Indo-Greeks and then the Kushans (1st

century CE), the interaction of Greek and Buddhist culture flourished in the area of Gandhara, in today's northern Pakistan, before spreading further into India, influencing the art of Mathura, and then the Hindu art of the Gupta empire, which was to extend to the rest of South-East Asia. The influence of Greco-Buddhist art also spread northward towards Central Asia, strongly affecting the art of the Tarim Basin, and ultimately the arts of China, Korea, and Japan.

Inchang Kim, a Korean scholar in Buddhist iconography has done a comprehensive survey of all the images of Maitreya in India to understand the evolution of Maitreya in the land of his origin. In his book 'The Future Buddha Maitreya' [63] which contained over 240 images of Maitreya from worldwide collections of ancient icons he discussed the origin of the Maitreya cult. Various literary references indicate that the cult of Maitreya first began in India in the Hinayana (Theravada) circle in the post Gautama Buddha period, but it has been generally believed that that the Maitreya cult began in India at a much earlier date, around the second century BC with the influence of Iranian Zoroastrianism. The images are found from the very beginning of Mathura and Gandhara schools of Buddhist art, and right up to the end of the Pala-Sena period when Buddhism disappeared from the major parts of India.

Kim has discussed on the works of previous scholars in this field, Grunwedel (1901) in Ghandara, Getty (1928) in northern Buddhist countries, Gordon (1939) in Tibet, Conze (1959), Soper (1959), and Rosenfield (1967). He proposed that the origin of Maitreya cult, although might be related to the Iranian god Mithra, due to phonetic similarity and to some extent, because of the functional resemblance between Maitri and Mitra of the Vedic pantheon, the sculptural evidence to understand the flourishing cult of Maitreya dated, at least, from the Kusana period as there is neither any definite literary evidence nor any Maitreya image with inscriptions that might help to understand the importance of the cult.

Hence, he was compelled to depend almost entirely upon the later evidences; the inscriptions on Buddhist images from early India, of the Kusana and Gupta periods, and the later Chinese

pilgrimage reports are the only sources that they have in hand so far.

According to the inscriptions found on images of the Buddha and Bodhisattva from Mathura, the donor's wish in making such religious images was mainly for the happiness of all sentient being and the attainment of supreme knowledge, and not for gaining entry to Western concept of paradise, unlike the wishes of early Chinese whose aim in worshipping Maitreya was to be reborn in the paradise after death.

However, the inscription of Bodhisattva now in the Lucknow Museum (Acc. No. 6648) mentions the donor's wish for the welfare of all living being and accumulate merit for this world and merit of the next. [63]

Kim summarised that the origin of Maitreya concept in India was much before the images of the Buddha were made in human form, sometime around the beginning of the Christian era, and that there is enough evidence in sculptural tradition to prove the existence of the popular cult of Maitreya in the early Buddhist community, at least from the beginning of the Kusana period (1st century CE). He stated that there was very little evidence to trace the nature of Maitreya faith in the Hinayana period; there is neither any definite evidence nor any Maitreya image with inscriptions that might help them understand the cult; there is also very little contemporaneous literary evidence associated with the practice of Maitreya faith in ancient India.

All the inscriptions described in Kim's book have failed to indicate the date in question, to justify the nullification of the hypothesis. Literary evidence as well as iconography indicates that Maitreya cult started actively only after Jesus' period.

Chapter 3

Discussions

Jesus as a *bodhisatta*

Jesus has used the Buddha's teachings in his sermons

There is enough evidence to accept that Jesus has used the Buddha*'s* teachings in many of his sermons and parables. Parables are stories told by Jesus to teach his followers when he faced with strong opposing to his sermons, which contained contradictory messages to the Old Testament. Gospels are the accounts of Jesus' life history and his teachings as written by his four apostles.

In the parable from the Gospels (Matthew13, 1-23; Mark 4, 1-20; Luke 8, 4-15) Jesus used phrases that have a similarity to that of the Buddha's teachings. "People hear my words: a farmer goes to sow his fields. The birds come and eat the seeds. Other seed falls on the path. And behold, some seed falls on the rock where there is no earth, and withers away. Some falls under the thorns and cannot grow. The seed that falls on good earth, however, sprouts and brings forth fruit." The farmer is Jesus and the seeds are his words of wisdom. The seeds, which are eaten by the birds, means, people who do not understand the words. The seeds that fall onto the rocks are the words of wisdom that goes in one ear and come out of the other. The seeds that land under the thorns mean those who hear and see, but do not act accordingly. The seeds, which land on the good earth, mean those that hear the words of wisdom and act accordingly. These phrases are direct words of the Buddha from *Ananadiya Sutta.* They do not use the plough nor sow seed, but without the labours of husbandry eat the most delicious food, spontaneously produced. It is classical expression in Buddhism using seed – *Kamma* – *Vipaka* – (Action – Resultant). Just as every object is accompanied by a shadow, even so every volitional activity is inevitably accompanied by its due effect.

Kamma is like the potential seed, and *Vipaka* could be likened to the fruit arising from the tree – the effect or result.

This is parallel to Buddha*'s* sermon: "According to the seed that's sown, so is the fruit you reap there from. Doer of good will gather good; Doer of evil will reap evils. Down is the seed and thou shalt taste the fruit thereof." (*Samyutta Nikaya*) These phrases of Jesus also have an essence of *Kamma* and *Vipaka*, the basic teaching of the Buddha. "A good tree does not bear rotten fruit. A rotten tree does not bear good fruit. Are figs gathered from thorns, or grapes from thistles? Every tree is known by its fruit. The good man produces good things from his store of goods and treasures. The evil man has evil things. For the mouth speaks from a full heart." [68]

There are many books written on the comparative and parallel sayings of Jesus and Buddha. *Marcus Borg* mentioned in his book '*Jesus and Buddha: The Parallel Sayings*'[69] that there are more than one hundred parallels. A review on this book wrote, 'Through their teachings, Jesus and Buddha not only created two of the world's major religions, they also transcended traditional thought to reveal many of the universal truths of human existence. As a result, the sayings of Jesus and Buddha are often nearly identical.

The *Jesus and Buddha: The Parallel Sayings* reveals how these two great teachers—whether talking about love, wisdom or materialism—were guiding us along the same path. At the heart of these amazing parallels lie two mysteries. How could Jesus, living 500 years after the Buddha in a land 3000 miles from India, embody the same teachings?

Some historians believe that Buddhist principles were known throughout the Roman Empire. Certain fringe theorists claim that

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[68] Gruber Elmar R, Holger Kersten. *The Original Jesus: The Buddhist Sources of Christianity. Comparative Sayings of the Buddha and Jesus*; *http://www.johnworldpeace.com/) op cit*

[69] *Jesus and Buddha: The Parallel Sayings,* Ed. Marcus J Borg; published by Ulysses Press.Ref.42 *Amazon.co.uk, Christian Books Section*

Jesus was trained in Buddhism and some even insist that he visited India! Since there's little evidence to support these claims, most scholars dismiss them, leading to the larger mystery.

If Jesus was not subject to Buddhist influences, why do so many of his sayings parallel these teachings? Is it possible that the wisdom of Jesus led him not only to lay the foundation for the West's predominant religion but also to communicate many of the eternal truths upon which Eastern beliefs are based? Jesus and Buddha delve into the mysteries surrounding Christ and the Buddha, while tracing the life story and beliefs of both.

Here are some of the parallel sayings quoted from Borg's book.

> **Jesus**: "Do to others as you would have them do to you." Luke 6:31
>
> **Buddha**: "Consider others as yourself." *Dhammapada* 10:1
>
> **Jesus**: "If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also." Luke 6:29
>
> **Buddha**: "If anyone should give you a blow with his hand, with a stick, or with a knife, you should abandon any desires and utter no evil words." *Majjhima Nikaya* 21:6
>
> **Jesus**: "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." Matthew25:45
>
> **Buddha**: "If you do not tend to one another, then who is there to tend you? Whoever would tend me, he should tend the sick." *Vinaya*, *Mahavagga* 8:26.3
>
> **Jesus**: "Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take the sword will perish by the sword." Matthew26:52
>
> **Buddha**: "Abandoning the taking of life, the ascetic *Gotama* dwells refraining from taking life, without stick or sword." *Dagha Nikaya* 1:1.8

Jesus: "Those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it." Mark 8:35

Buddha: "With the relinquishing of all thought and egotism, the enlightened one is liberated through not clinging." *Majjhima Nikaya* 72:15

Jesus: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you." Matthew28:19-20

Buddha: "Teach the dharma which is lovely at the beginning, lovely in the middle, lovely at the end. Explain with the spirit and the letter in the fashion of Brahma. In this way you will be completely fulfilled and wholly pure." *Vinaya Mahavagga* 1:11.1

Note: From the "Jesus and Buddha: The Parallel Sayings" edited by Marcus Borg

Jesus taught his followers to know thyself and to purify himself for different levels of perfections. This is quite evident by his following teachings. 'How can you look for the splinter in your brother's eye and not notice the stick in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the splinter in your eye', when you do not see the stick in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the stick from your own eye, and then you can see to remove the splinter that is in your brother's eye. Jesus said: He who would know everything, but fails to know himself misses the knowledge of everything'. (14)

For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away (Luke 9:25). For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? (Matthew16:26; Mark 8:36). Jesus has preached perfection rather than direct salvation by the God; 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect' (Matthew5:48). The perfection is in steps and Jesus has given them eight distinct

ways by which his followers might receive joy, which was given in the Sermon on the Mount. A commentary of the sermon made by Elder Harold B. Lee said: 'Christ came not only into the world to make an atonement for the sins of mankind but to set an example before the world of the standard of perfection of God's law and of obedience to the Father. In his Sermon on the Mount the Master has given us somewhat of a revelation of his own character, which was perfect, or what might be said to be an autobiography, every syllable of which he had written down in deeds,' and in so doing has given us a blueprint for our own lives." (*Decisions for Successful Living*, pp. 55-56; 8 page 57)

From above quotations, we can clearly see that Jesus may have come across the Buddhist teaching somehow, which is not impossible for a bright person like Jesus who can speak both Greek and a local dialect, the Aramaic which is the language of the Middle-East in his time. Many learned persons of that era spoke Greek, and Buddhism may not be unfamiliar within the circle that spoke Greek as we can find the evidence in the King Milinda (*Milanda*) and *Bhikkhu Nagasena*'s questions and answers.

If Jesus had really used the Buddha's teachings, why did he do so in such a way that would cause confusion to his latter day followers, and a contradiction to the Old Testament?

The following evidence may point out why he had to do it in such a way.

If we look at the overview of Jesus' public ministry which started at the age of 30 years, after a long disappearance for twenty eight years, which he was said to be with his parents (despite a dramatic description of his knowledge on Judaism and his authority on the Temple in his 12th year); the first year of the Saviour's public ministry was opened by the dramatic event of the cleansing of the temple. Significant interviews with Nicodemus and the woman of Samaria followed, in which Jesus his identity and important doctrines for entrance into his kingdom.

This period is referred to by scholars, as his early Judean ministry. This was followed by what is usually called his Galilean ministry, which included his visit to Nazareth. He was rejected for the first time in Nazareth after the declaration of his messiah-ship to his townsmen. This period marked the beginning of Jesus' miracles and his preaching to the Jews. After his first rejection he went to Capernaum, which was referred to as his city later on. He performed more miracles than in any other city, and here he gave some of his greatest discourses. Yet, he was also rejected in Capernaum (Matthew1:23, 24)

Jesus turned toward the cities that surrounded the Sea of Galilee. Peter, James, John, and Andrew were called to follow him. In the second phase of the Galilean ministry he gave instructions to his disciples and to the twelve apostles, the Sermon on the Mount.

He was faced with mounting opposition and this has made him to use another teaching method, the parables. These were sometimes designed to conceal his message from the unbelievers.

He went to his hometown, Nazareth again to give a discourse, but was rejected for the second time. (Mark 6:1-6)

Before Jesus, Palestine was under the rule of a Syrian king Antiochus IV (Epiphanies), who subjected the Jews to the religious practice of his kingdom. Judaism was completely proscribed. Later on, Syrians were expelled by the Jews under the leadership of a Jewish family, Maccabees. After the degeneration of the Maccabeean leadership, Palestine was again subjected to Roman Empire, under Herod. Judaism was in decline during the years when Jesus was born, and many Jewish would not accept any teachings that were contradictory to the Old Testament.

Jesus had a great mission to perform. He had to break down, to fulfil, as was told, the Law of Moses. In the Sermon on the Mount he altered the meaning of the Mosaic law on adultery by saying,' Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in

his heart' (Matthew5:27-28). (This expression clearly denotes the idea of committing *akusala-kamma* by *citta*, the mind.)

This and other teachings like 'turn the other cheek' mark the turning away from, the fulfilment of, the Mosaic Law and the introduction and operation of the law of the Gospel he restored.[70]

If we review the first two years of his ministry we can find a lot of opposition and rejection despite showing off miracles and power. This could be due the fact that his teachings did not agree with the Old Testament as mentioned above. According to the above quotations Jesus had a mission to perform (a messiah for the Christians, and perhaps, also to fulfil his perfection), and this might have led him to use an indirect method of relaying his message through parables and pretending himself to be the son of God so that the audience would accept his teachings.

The Bible

The Bible is the collection of religious writings of Judaism and of Christianity. The exact composition of the Bible is dependent on the religious traditions of specific denominations. Modern Judaism generally recognizes a single set of canonical books known as the *Tanakh*, or Hebrew or Jewish Bible. It comprises three parts: the Torah ("Teaching", also known as the Pentateuch or "Five Books of Moses"), the Prophets, and the Writings. It was primarily written in Hebrew with some small portions in Aramaic.

The Christian Bible includes the same books as the Tanakh (referred to in this context as the Old Testament), but usually in a different order, together with twenty-seven specifically Christian books collectively known as the New Testament. Those were originally written in Greek. Among some traditions, the Bible includes books that were not accepted in other traditions, often referred to as apocryphal. Eastern Orthodox

[70] The Life and Teachings of Jesus & his Apostles, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah 02324 74000, Chapter 1, Section 1; pp12 Ref.43

Churches use all of the books that were incorporated into the Septuagint, to which they add the earliest Greek translation of the Deuterocanonicals; Roman Catholics include some of these books in their canon; and many Protestant Bibles follow the Jewish canon, excluding the additional books. Some editions of the Christian Bible have a separate Biblical apocrypha section for books not considered canonical. (Wikipedia)

Who wrote the Bible?

The Bible has two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is taken from the Torah, the Jewish scripture that contains Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Here one finds accounts of the creation of the world, the calling of Israel to be God's people, the stories of Israel's patriarchs and matriarchs and God's involvement with them, and the laws that God gave Moses indicating how his people were to worship him and behave toward one another in community together.

The New Testament consists of Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke & John, fourteen epistles of Paul, acts and apocalypses. The apostle Paul, who was a highly educated Jew established churches throughout eastern Mediterranean after Jesus was crucified, principally in urban centers, convincing pagans who adhered any of the Roman Empire's polytheistic religions that the Jewish God was the only one to be worshipped, and that Jesus was his Son, who has died for the sins of the world and was returning soon for judgment on earth (1 Thess.1:9-10). (Misquoting Jesus, Ehrman 2005)

Paul was never mentioned in the Bible that he met Jesus when he was alive and all the ideas that he had introduced in the Bible were based upon the sayings of the apostles, mainly from the four, and many contemporary gospels that did not fit into these ideas, including that of Thomas (Jesus' twin brother, Matthew 13:55) and Gnostic gospels, were disregarded, as heretic and were excluded from the Bible that we

see today. Jesus' true teaching could have been different from what the Bible is saying today.

He preached that Christ died, in accordance with the scriptures.. and that he was raised, in accordance with the Jewish scriptures (1 Cor. 15:3-4). He wrote some thirteen letters, the first letter to the Thessalonians (dated ~49 C.E) , some twenty years after Jesus' death and some twenty years before any of the Gospel accounts of Jesus' life.

Who was St. Paul?

Saint Paul, who called himself the "Apostle to the Gentiles," was, together with Saint Peter and James the Just, the most notable of early Christian missionaries. Unlike the Twelve Apostles, there is no indication that Paul ever met Jesus before the latter's crucifixion. According to the Acts of the Apostles, his conversion took place as he was traveling the road to Damascus, he experienced a vision of the resurrected Jesus. He was temporarily blinded. Paul asserts that he received the Gospel not from man, but by "the revelation of Jesus Christ".

Fourteen epistles in the New Testament are traditionally attributed to Paul, though in some cases the authorship is disputed. Paul had often employed an amanuensis, only occasionally writing himself. As a sign of authenticity, the writers of these epistles sometimes employ a passage presented as being in Paul's own handwriting. These epistles were circulated within the Christian community. They were prominent in the first New Testament canon ever proposed (by Marcion), and they were eventually included in the orthodox Christian canon of Scripture. They are believed to be the earliest-written books of the New Testament.

Marcion (ca 110-160) was a prominent philosopher-teacher in Rome. He had come to Rome from Asia Minor, and being a rich shipbuilder, he donated enormously to the Roman Church, studied the Christian faith and working out its details in several writings he was the first Christian

who produced an actual canon of scripture constituting the sacred texts of the faith. Marcion was completely absorbed by the life and teachings of the apostle Paul, who had taught that a right standing before God came only by faith in Christ, not by doing any of the works prescribed by the Jewish law (epistle Romans and Galatians). Marcion, however, interpreted this differentiation between the law of the Jews and faith in Christ that there was an absolute distinction between the law and the gospel, and concluded that the God of Jesus and Paul was not the God of the Old Testament.

Marcion highlighted the fact that there were two different Gods: the God of the Old Testament, who created the world, called Israel to be his people, and gave them his harsh law; and the God of Jesus, who sent Christ into the world to save people from the wrathful vengeance of the Jewish creator God. He believed this understanding of Jesus was taught by Paul himself, and had included the ten letters of Paul available to him, out of which pastoral Epistles of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus were not included in the New Testament. His canon also consisted of Gospel of Luke, which Paul sometimes referred to as his Gospel, and ten Epistles, but did not contain the Old Testament.

Marcion claimed that false believers, who did not have his understanding of the faith, had transmitted these eleven books by copying them, and by adding bits and pieces here and there in order to accommodate their own beliefs, including the false notion that the God of the Old Testament was also the God of Jesus. So, Marcion corrected the eleven books of his canon by editing out references to the Old Testament God, or to the creation as the work of the true God, or to the Law as something that should be followed. This was the first ever compiled Christian canon, which later became the Bible, but Macion was later labeled as a heretic due to this belief.

Marcion (Μαρκίων) (ca. 110-160) was a Christian theologian who was excommunicated by the Early Christian church at Rome as a heretic. His teachings were influential during the 2nd century and a few centuries after, rivaling that of the Church of Rome. As he offered an

alternative theology to the Canonical, Proto-orthodox, Trinitarian and Christological views of the Roman Church, the early Church Fathers denounced him sharply; their views dominate Christianity today.

Marcion is sometimes referred to as one of the Gnostics, but from what assessment of his lost writings can be gleaned from his mainstream opponents, his teachings were quite different in nature. His canon included ten Pauline Epistles and one gospel called the Gospel of Marcion, a rejection of the whole Hebrew Bible, and did not include the rest of the books later incorporated into the canonical New Testament. He propounded Christianity free from Jewish doctrines with Paul as the reliable source of authentic doctrine. Paul was, according to Marcion, the only apostle who had rightly understood the new message of salvation as delivered by Christ. (Wikipedia)

Paul's influence on Christian thinking arguably has been more significant than any other New Testament author. His influence on the main strands of Christian thought has been demonstrable: from St. Augustine of Hippo to the controversies between Gottschalk and Hincmar of Reims; between Thomism and Molinism; Martin Luther, John Calvin and the Arminians; to Jansenism and the Jesuit theologians, and even to the German church of the twentieth century through the writings of the scholar Karl Barth, whose commentary on the Letter to the Romans had a political as well as theological impact.

Paul took over the reins of Christianity after Jesus, and allegedly, his writings took it in a very different direction to what Jesus taught in the Gospels ("Rejesus" website, a Christian propaganda).[71]

It explains further: In all Paul's writings (there are 13 of his letters in the New Testament, though some may not have been seen by him) there is virtually no information about Jesus' life, apart from his death and resurrection. Wasn't Paul interested in these stories? Paul seems to repeat astonishingly little of Jesus' teachings. There

[71] *http://www.rejesus.com* op cit

are a handful of direct quotes, but little else. No parables, no Lord's Prayer, none of those pithy sayings.

The Kingdom of God is the one central theme of Jesus' preaching, but it gets much less of an airing in Paul. Paul never followed Jesus while he was alive, but was converted by a vision of the risen Christ.

Did he lack knowledge of, or interest in the life of Jesus? No longer having to follow the Jewish Law was a major theme of Paul's letters to his converts. This means he has already told them all about Jesus, and he doesn't need to repeat himself. In balance, it's hard to deny that Christianity took a significant change of direction under St Paul, but there was no reason this was not a legitimate development of what Jesus himself began. (Wikipedia)

The Conspiracy Theory

Variations in the Bible have been reported as early as 1707 when John Mills, fellow of Queen's College, Oxford published the 1550 edition of Stephanus' Greek New Testament, stating that there were some thirty thousand places of variations among the surviving one hundred Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. These variations were due to copyists either making them deliberately to change or by errors in copying.

Since there are many similarities between Buddhist philosophy and the teachings of Jesus, which the Church could not hide and have described in the New Testament (that relays the opinion of Jesus), it is plausible that the Bible has been rewritten in order to fit some of Jesus' teachings into the Old Testament. This could be the reason why Jesus has been portrayed as we see him today, to be a *micchadhitthi* that holds a creator view to some fundamental Buddhists, and as the one who has a great compassion to the eyes of those who are sympathetic to his ordeal. There are reasons to believe in such a conspiracy theory.

A book that has alleged such a theory has been published. Tony Bushby*,* an Australian author, in his book on '*The Bible*

Fraud"[72] described in details how the New Testament was adulterated by Constantine in 325 AD. He had amended in such a way to suit with the Church. The oldest known Bible to date, the "***Sinai Bible***" housed in the British Museum has a staggering 14,800 differences from today's Bible. After 12 years of full-time research, Tony Bushby exposes the greatest deception in the history of mankind, and provides archival evidence showing why the suppression of facts is as important to the churches of today as it was some 2000 years ago.[73]

As Tony points out, the history of our 'genuine' Bibles is a convoluted one. Firstly, we cannot be sure that we have the full version as it was originally intended. In 1415, the Church of Rome took an extraordinary step to destroy all knowledge of two second-century Jewish books, that it said contained the true name of Jesus Christ.

The Antepope Benedict XIII firstly singled out for condemnation a secret Latin treatise called "Mar Yesu" and then issued instructions to destroy all copies of the book of Elxai. The Rabbinic fraternity once held the destroyed manuscripts with great reverence, for they were comprehensive original records reporting the life of Rabbi Jesus.

Later, Pope Alexander VI ordered all copies of the Talmud destroyed, with the Spanish Grand Inquisitor Tomas de Torquemada (1420-98) responsible for the elimination of 6,000 volumes at Salamanca alone. Solomon Romano (1554) also burnt many thousands of Hebrew scrolls; and in 1559, every Hebrew book in the city of Prague was confiscated. The mass destruction of Jewish books included hundreds of copies of the Old Testament and caused the irretrievable loss of many original handwritten documents. [C. Norman Shealy, M.D., PhD, President, Holos University Graduate Seminary - Nov 2002]

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[72] The Bible Fraud; Tony Bushby, ISBN 0-9579007-1-6 PB; 0-9579007-0-8 HB (Ref:44)

[73] The Bible Fraud by Tony Bushby op cit

Remarks by the Duke de Ronceray and other scholars

Tony Bushby revealed to the world for the first time the original information about the emergence of the *New Testament* and its story of Jesus Christ. It provided historical evidence showing not only vital ancient manuscripts been hidden from the public domain but also other sensitive and associated Biblical material had been purposely withheld or suppressed from the general populace. He had written a masterpiece, filling in major blanks of history, and described an unbelievable panorama of political intrigue, marriage, and bloodlines, that brings light to the entire political structure of our world, as well as the earliest beginnings of Christianity.

Apparently the real Jesus lit a fire, a fire that inspired others to the point of fanaticism, which turned the world into a religious political nightmare -- and through that nightmare, what is known as *The New Testament* was born -- not out of any love of the truth, but out of a desperate need to stop the religious insanity that had developed over 300 years after the real Jesus left his life. The author had put forward a thesis that the Christian world has been mistaken, has been deceived, for most of the last two thousand years. The basis for his assertions came from original Church documents, which he had carefully pieced together to come up with some somewhat startling conclusions.

Some of his sources are well known and include "*The Forgotten Monarchy of Scotland* (itself well worthwhile reading)", "*The Chronicles of Geoffrey of Monmouth*" and "*The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*", both of the latter being standard reading for me as a child. Others are less well-known, and some have been hidden away for centuries. But, they are all there and are listed. ***The King James version of the Bible*** gets a special mention, as, according to the author, it was redrafted by ***Sir Francis Bacon*** (also alleged to have written Shakespeare's plays) who inserted a cipher system of code into the work. This aspect is fascinating.

The suggestion that members of the early Church migrated to Britain has been discussed before but here the author gives very

clear specifics of the exodus to Britain and Southern France, and the institution of the Celtic Church in about the year A.D. 37.

Glastonbury (of special interest to Grail researchers) is named as the burial place of *Joseph of Arimathea* and it is stated that "The British Church took precedence over all other Churches" (a position which is consistent with what is contained in Magna Carta). It is stated Jesus became the King of Britain and the author documented clearly the residence in Rome where Prince Caradoc, the son of Jesus, lived for some years. He sets out to show the definite connection between Rome and Britain, and the involvement of Emperor Constantine and his mother in the institutional development of the Christian Church.

A book review on The Bible Fraud made by Gwenn H. Wycoff, Los Angeles, California, October 2001, is as follows: in the First Century, the Druidic institutions were the largest in the world, both in size and in attendance. In Britain, alone they had a recorded number of sixty universities and over 60,000 enrolled students. Ancient manuscripts, from the Dead Sea scrolls and India, to almost forgotten writings of the Druids, tell a far different story about the beginnings of Christianity – a story deeply interesting, intriguing, and fascinating.

The Emperor Constantine, in 325 A.D., established the Christian religion, but how many people have had the privilege to know what that entailed, what records were brought to the meeting, who argued for what cause, and how it was all settled? How many people know the political and religious strife at the time? What it meant to burn books, and records – records that apparently had already been corrupted through the religious competition of the day?

The time period between the real Jesus and the fabrication of the truth in the Council of Nicaea was full of turmoil, for apparently, some of what Jesus wanted to say did get out, and the crowd that heard it repeated it, embellished it, and then the ignorant made stories up about it. There were confused versions, and heated

debates, because by the time Constantine made use of it, it was already a big moneymaking event.

It will be no surprise to reveal that the author queries who actually wrote the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and states that the Gospel of St. Peter was suppressed by the Church. The role of the Druids in Britain and their involvement in the Church and the early universities (60 in Britain in the first century) is well covered.

Here are some of the remarks on this extra-ordinary book of revelation by another reviewer.

The good news for Christians is that Jesus was literally, at that time, the Son of God, but the bad news is that the title “Son of God” meant something entirely different then than it does today. There is a truth about a man named Jesus, and his story, not only is inspiring, but leaves us wondering -- exactly what did he really discover, where did his quest eventually lead him, and what burning message did he really have?

Apparently the real Jesus lit a fire, a fire that inspired others to the point of fanaticism, which turned the world into a religious political nightmare – and through that nightmare, what is known as The New Testament was born – not out of any love of the truth, but out of a desperate need to stop the religious insanity that had developed over 300 years after the real Jesus left his life.

And, Jesus didn’t leave like we’re told. In a twisted story that begins in Israel, and takes us to Britain and then to Egypt we find an honourable, spiritual man on a holy quest. A man who, it seems, discovered something that he did want to tell the world, but hardly got the chance. A man who wanted to share all the secrets with the People, but who became so embroiled in the “control and domination” political structure of that time, that he was unable to give us more than just a hint. A man who seemed to have defied everything and everyone, but the question remains, what was it he really wanted to tell us? (Gwenn H. Wycoff, Los Angeles, California)

If we look at Tony Bushby's work on the Bible Fraud it is quite evident that the Bible that we see today has been changed substantially. However, it does not necessarily mean that what Tony Bushby has written was totally true as he had also based his work on the available sources of information, but there is no way that we can verify the statements that he had made.

To get a balanced view on this context, here is a remark from a Christian source regarding the changes in the Bible (personal communications).[74] When referring to an attempt to change or invent the text of the Bible in the fourth century, I presume that the Tony Bushby is referring either to the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, which was moderated by Constantine, or to the apostate Church's restriction of the Scriptures to the Latin Vulgate text in order to keep the text out of the hands of the common people.

In the first instance, it should be noted that the Council of Nicaea did not prescribe the canon of Scripture or the doctrine of Jesus' divinity. Both of these were already established and in use by the church (that is, by the mass body of Christians rather than the political institution established over the Dark Ages) by the time of the Council, and in fact the Council was called, in part, to debate the teachings of one third-century clergyman (Arius) who was teaching a reduced view of Jesus' divinity (that he was a demi-god, the highest of God's finite creatures, but not equal and identical with God himself).

The Council examined the four Gospels - already extant and in constant use by the church at that time - and the teachings of the Apostles, and declared virtually unanimously that Arius was in error. The Nicene Creed (the statement of faith used in Anglican services) was a statement by the Council to re-affirm the exact teachings of Scripture as it existed at the time - it was categorically not a 'new faith' nor a new idea of Jesus' identity. The rest of the Council's time was devoted to purely organizational matters regarding the

[74] Simon Southery-Davis. Personal communication <SimonSouthey-Davies/e/POSTOFFICE@POSTOFFICE>

running of the churches' daily business. Constantine merely presided, and was not a major participator in the Council, which was a meeting of over 250 bishops from both within and without the Roman Empire.

For the second case, it is clear that the apostate Church did attempt to suppress knowledge of the text of Scripture by restricting its distribution in any language but the liturgical Latin Vulgate translation, which could (conveniently) be read by few outside the clergy. Indeed, for an unauthorized layperson to be caught reading the 'sacred text' was a capital offence! However, if the Church felt it necessary to prevent the common people having knowledge of Scripture, it must surely be a logical conclusion that the Scripture itself would discredit their teachings (this was clearly the case in such examples as the doctrine of purgatory, and the idea, still occurring in the Catholic church, that one could 'buy' one's salvation).

It is fairly undeniable that the Church from around 400-500 AD until the Reformation was effectively a political institution and not a spiritual one. However, it should not be confused an apostate institution with the faith of individual believers. The fundamental claim of the Christian believer is not the truth of the Bible (although we certainly believe it) but the person of Jesus Christ. The Bible exists as a signpost for the seeker in order to lead them to find Christ himself (not the idea of Christ or his teachings, but the living person), and our faith depends on Christ rather than on the text of Scripture.

However, the fact remains that the Bible is the single most reliable and well-attested ancient document currently in our possession. The oldest extant sample, we have has been dated to around 120 AD, portions of the text it contains can be dated to a mere 50 years after Jesus' death. In historical terms, that is staggeringly close. By contrast, the next nearest documents have gaps of centuries between their writing and the earliest surviving copies.

In addition, the sheer multiplicity of citations and references to Scripture unearthed in other documents means that we can be certain that the Bible has survived the millennia essentially intact. This leads to another point about attempts to 'suppress' or 'rewrite' portions of Scripture - it is, quite simply, impossible.

The Bible already existed in 50 languages by the fifth century; what we call the New Testament had been cited and referenced by contemporary authors since it was first given to the churches in the first century (we know of thousands of such quotations). Unlike many religions, such as Islam with its caliphate, the early churches had no centralized 'governing body' and saw themselves answerable to no human authority. Yet in the face of this, if the apostate Church had attempted to change its scriptures, it would have had to gather every existing copy from inside and outside the Empire, in every language, and destroy them; it would have had to destroy or alter every citation in external texts; it would have had to change the practices and rituals of the Church to fit its new faith and force believers to accept them; and best of all, it would have had to do all of this without leaving any evidence of controversy! We have extant samples of Scripture, which agree with the current text and pre-date the events being referred to; did the conspirators also forge these? [55]

Here's another quotation on the changes made in the Bible from **The Christian Gospel Trust, Henley Bridge House, Asi-Iburniha, Battle, Sussex.**[75]

Archdeacon Wilberforce of Westminster said "that after the Council of Nicea, AD 325, the MSS. of the New Testament were considerably tampered with". And Professor Nestlé in his "introduction to the Textual Criticism of the Greek Testament" tells us that certain scholars, called correctors, were appointed by the ecclesiastical authorities, and actually commissioned to correct the text of Scripture in the interest of what was considered Orthodoxy.

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[75] The Gospel of the Holy Twelve <www.thenazareneway.com>

"Beyond question of doubt", says Manley Palmer Hall, "records concerning Jesus do exist. It is equally certain that they are in the hands of people (the Vatican in Rome) who do not intend to make them available as they would endanger the institution of Christian Theology".

Moreover, Rev. G. J. Ouseley, who was a priest, first in the Established Church of Ireland, and afterwards in the Catholic Apostolic Church came across a hitherto unknown, not written evangelical text in 1881.

This Gospel record is the recovered document from which the Four Gospels as we have them today were built upon. It was the first formulated life of the Christ and was written by St. John about the year 70 AD., when he was imprisoned in Rome and given page by page to one whom he could trust.

When the scroll was completed and after its contents had been made known to the Apostles, it was taken to Tibet by the same disciple, who left it in the care of a unnamed lama. Here, it remained until a friar, named Placidus, visited the monastery in the eighteen seventies and asked if he might show it to the Church Authorities in Rome.

The scroll was then given to him and on the way home, which took a long time, he translated a portion of it into Latin and on his arrival in Rome read it to the assembled Cardinals. At first they were impressed, but as he proceeded to reveal the contents they realised that to make it known would discredit the Church which had, during the Council of Nicea, eliminated from the Gospels the Master's teaching about the love and care of animals and about abstaining from eating flesh-foods. And so the scroll was hidden away in the archives of the Vatican, where it remains to this day.

The reason this Gospel contains much that is in St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke and St. John is because there were many Gospels written about this time containing the true teaching of Jesus, but this was the only one that escaped the pen of the `correctors', because they did not

know of its existence.

The other Gospels contained the teaching of Jesus about the avoidance of meat-eating and about the love for animals, but all this teaching was eliminated by the `correctors'. "The Gospel of the Holy Twelve" is an authentic Gospel and should be accepted just as it is as the original teaching of Jesus.

Like all Sacred Scriptures, The Gospel of the Holy Twelve is mystical, and for right understanding it must be so interpreted. Its value lies in the teaching which in the garment is veiled. To understand the teaching, the garment must be lifted or removed. Then "falsehood passes away, but truth remains."

In all sacred mysteries, parables are used as garments for Truth that is hidden in its very expression. In one of the `Sayings of Jesus' —as recorded in the oxyrhynchus Papyri[76]—we are told: "That which is hidden from thee shall be revealed to thee. For there is nothing hidden which shall not be made manifest, nor buried which shall not be raised." To those who hid "the key to knowledge" Jesus said "Ye entered not in yourselves and to them that were entering in ye opened not." Ultimately, "Truth itself is unutterable save by God to God."

As stated in the Gospel of the Holy Twelve: "Truth is absolute and is in God alone. To men is Truth revealed, according to their capacity to understand and receive." "Look for the sufficient meaning of the manifest Universe and of the written word, and thou shalt find only the Mystical Sense."

"To some I speak things common. To others in great light I reveal mysteries: My words are Spirit and Life and are not to be estimated by

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[76] Oxyrhynchus Papyri: the Collection of many thousand fragments of papyri, found in 1897 onwards at Oxyrhynhus, a centre of Christian culture in the 4th Century, some 10 miles west of the Nile, near the modern Behnesa. The most celebrated are two series of "sayings of Jesus".

the sense of Man. They, the prophets, deliver the letter but thou diseloseth the sense. They publish mysteries, but thou explainest the meaning of things sealed. They cry with words, but thou givest understanding to the hearer." At the close of the Gospel of the Holy Twelve we read: "For them that believe regarding the spirit rather than the letter which killeth, the things herein related are true as Spiritual verities, for others they are as an idle tale."

It was not without profound meaning that Jesus said: "Raise the stone" of the indwelling Self (to the level of Spirit), and there thou shalt find Me": and "Cleave the wood", of the lower and outer consciousness, "there am I". The "Son of God in man" must be lifted up for the right understanding of the Holy Scripture. Jesus said unto "the sick of the palsy"—and there are many such—"Arise, and take up thy couch."

One of the first acts of Jesus after His resurrection was to "open the Scriptures" to two of his disciples—-Cleophas and another— whom He joined on their way from Jerusalem to Emmaus. These disciples He found "reasoning together" about the things which had then lately come to pass; and forthwith "He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning Himself"; and He blamed them for their "folly" and for their "slowness of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken."

Had they listened to the dictates of their hearts rather than to the reasoning of their minds, their Spiritual eyes would not have been "holden." Jesus also said: "My soul grieveth over the sons of men, because they are blind in their heart and see not," and again Jesus warned his followers to "beware of false prophets which come in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves." They would be known "by their fruits."

The fact that the disciples reasoned together implies a limitation of their consciousness to the outer and lower mental planes, wherein are seen but "the shadows of the tomb." Thus were the Spiritual eyes "holden". Their "Heart" was "slow"—a slowness which indicated lack of spiritual understanding. But "While He talked with them by the way, and while He

opened to them the Scriptures", a change came over them: "Their hearts did burn within them", and their Spiritual eyes were opened.

They awoke and knew Him. He was known of them in the "breaking of the Bread" of Divine Truth which is the food of the soul. And on the opening of their Spiritual eyes, He whom therefore they had known outwardly. "Vanished from their sight", and they were enabled to testify: "The Lord is risen indeed"!

Most of the mistakes of the materialists arise from understanding localities and things material, when they should understand conditions and principles. The letter of Scripture is but the shadow of Divine Truth.

Those who mistake the shadow for the substance and the substance for the shadow, never arrive at Reality but follow false aims. Those who know the substance as the substance and the shadow as the shadow, arrive at Reality, and follow right aims.

Why are certain teachings hidden beneath the letter? Why, it may be asked, did Jesus teach the multitude in parables? The answer is, the Mysteries cannot be taught by the blood-guilty, nor may they except as "dark sayings", be given to those—the multitude—who live in conflict with Christ's teachings.

On this the Gospel of the Holy Twelve is explicit: "They who partake of benefits which are gotten by wronging God's creatures, cannot be righteous", nor can they "whose hands are stained with blood, or whose mouths are defiled with flesh", understand the mysteries of the kingdom, nor are they fit to receive the highest mysteries—"For this people's hearts are waxed gross".

The Aramaic "fragments" to which reference has already been made also deal with the "healing works of Jesus", many of which were effected by methods now known as nature-cure. It is therein recorded that Jesus said: "He who kills, kills himself; and whoso eats the flesh of slain beasts, eats of the body of death. For in his body every drop of

their blood turns to poison, and their death will become his death." The command against killing is insisted on throughout, and the eating of all dead flesh is condemned.

The age in which we live is no age of faith. It is materialistic and anti-christian. Wickedness has become legalised. There is materialism in science and materialism in the Church and in religion. Truth is being suppressed and people are losing faith in so- called democracy and reformers ignore religion and Religion is therefore, and no wonder, repellent to many in these days.

It is important to bear in mind that while the souls of the Righteous become vehicles of Divine manifestation, some inspired writings are coloured by the character or mentality of the instrument or medium through whom they come.

They are not always to be regarded as infallible in every word. Inspiration of the Spirit does not necessarily imply infallibility of utterance, because no man is wholly without error. In the Gospel of the Holy Twelve we read that even among the prophets there has been found "the word of error".

For a divine message its own truth is the best evidence of genuine inspiration; which is the inbreathing of the Divine through the spiritual organs planted in man for that purpose. Inspiration has its birth in God. To men truth is revealed according to their capacity to understand and receive it.

The creation and salvation of the world is achieved "By the Descent of Spirit into Matter, and the Ascent of Matter into Spirit through the Ages," and such is the teaching of the Gospel of the Holy Twelve. We also find in this Gospel a command of Jesus that we "Love one another and all the creatures of God"—God being in all creatures.

Children are to be "brought up in the ways of righteousness, neither eating flesh, nor drinking strong drink; nor hunting the creatures which

God hath given into the hands of man to protect." That Jesus came into the world to put an end to bloody sacrifices and flesh eating is explicit.

The doctrine of Regeneration is definitely taught by Jesus as the means whereby man is "made perfect through suffering: changes of life for the perfecting of souls." Having thus become "purified through many experiences," man shall die no more, neither shall he be born any more, for death hath no more dominion over him. In this teaching, there is no "scapegoat" Christianity: nor forgiveness or remission of sin by "vicarious atonement": For sins against the law of God there can be no remission save by "repentance and amendment."

"The Scriptures contain the Word of God, but often interpolated and transformed by the error of man, whether by accident or design.* Shall we cast away the gold or despise it for the sake of the dross mingled with it? Doing this we should be foolish, not wise."

The purpose of making known the Gospel of the Holy Twelve is for the restoration of the original text, depicting the life and uttering the truth relating to Christ's mission on earth. In this Gospel the prediction by Jesus was fulfilled. He said to His disciples: "They shall put you out of the Synagogues because they have not known me". And if it be asked who are His disciples, the answer is given thus: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another, and shew mercy and love to all creatures of God."

Let us bear in mind the following words recorded in the Oxyrhynehus Papyri: "Jesus saith, let not him who seeks cease until he finds, and when he finds he shall be astonished; astonished he shall reach the Kingdom, and having reached the Kingdom he will rest."

Let it be said that no mere ecelasiastical organisation will in the long run be able to stand against the eternal principles of Justice, Humanity and Love to all manifestations of God, whether human on non-human.

Of the Churches it may be said—"We sat on the ancient foundations,

but we revealed not the ancient truth; we have the keys to heaven, but we opened not the gate ourselves nor suffered others who desired, to enter. To us was given Light, but we concealed it in a dark place, and those who cried for more light we persecuted and counted as heretics, and caused many to be put to death in our blindness.

And even now. 0 Master, we had well nigh again rejected Thee, but by the mercy of the Eternal—we heard the Holy and True doctrines which once Thou gayest by parable—even the doctrines of ancient times given anew—the new wine of Thy Kingdom; and at length our eyes being opened and our ears being unstopped, we have returned to Thee."

As this Gospel was not addressed to the heathen, but chiefly to the true followers of Jesus, in the early days of the Church of Jerusalem, so now it is sent to modern Christians who have strayed into worse than heathen darkness; and if perchance it may be received by men and women of "Peace and Goodwill" to whom "Peace on Earth" was originally announced, the effort in sending it forth will be amply rewarded.

It is evident that the Bible has been changed substantially to suit the Chruch. Jesus' teachings have a definite similarity with that of the Buddha, but the God hypothesis (*Atta*) is also there, which may give fuel for fundamental Buddhists to deny the assertion. Despite this controversial view there may still be a room for us to consider that Jesus could be a *Bodhisatta* if we find out why the God hypothesis had to be included. We may find a clue if we look into the life history of Jesus, and why Jesus was not accepted when he first gave the sermons.

Where was Jesus between 13 to 29 years of age?

To answer this question, we will have to look first into the chronology of the life of Jesus Christ first. The period between 13

to 29 years of age is peculiarly missing in his chronology. The Church and the authorities tried to explain this hidden life of Jesus as a period when he was attending his parents in Nazareth, but this explanation may not be satisfactory especially when we found that Jesus' life at 12 years was spectacularly described, and all of a sudden he went into obscurity attending to his family's needs. This hidden period is questionable as to what Jesus might be doing during this long period of his emerging brilliant career.

Chronology of the Life of Jesus Christ [77]

In the following paragraphs, we shall endeavour to establish the absolute and relative chronology of *our Lord's* life, i.e. we shall show first how certain facts connected with the history of *Jesus Christ* fit in with the course of universal history, and secondly how the rest of the life of *Jesus* must be arranged according to the inter-relation of its single elements.

Absolute Chronology

The incidents whose absolute chronology may be determined with more or less probability are the year of *Christ's* nativity, of the beginning of His public life, and of His death. As we cannot fully examine the data entering into these several problems, the reader ought to compare what has been said on these points in the article *Biblical Chronology*.

The Nativity

St. Matthew (2:1) tells us that Jesus was born "in the days of King Herod". Josephus (Ant., XVII, viii, 1) informs us that Herod died after ruling thirty four years *de facto*, thirty seven years *de jure*. Now Herod was made rightful king of Judea A.U.C. 714, while he began his actual rule after taking Jerusalem A.U.C. 717. As the Jews

[77] Chronology of the Life of Jesus Christ, Catholic Encyclopedia Ref.45 (*http://www/newadvent.org/ cathen/ 03731a.htm*)

reckoned their years from Nisan to Nisan, and counted fractional parts as an entire year, the above data will place the death of Herod in A.U.C. 749, 750, 751. Again, Josephus tells us from that an eclipse of the moon occurred not long before Herod's death; such an eclipse occurred from 12 to 13 March, A.U.C. 750, so that Herod must have died before the Passover of that year which fell on 12 April (Josephus, "Ant"., iv, 4; viii, 4). As Herod killed the children up to two years old, in order to destroy the new born King of the Jews, we are led to believe that Jesus may have been born A.U.C. 747, 748, 749. The enrolment under Cyrinus mentioned by St. Luke in connection with the nativity of Jesus Christ, and the remarkable astronomical conjunction of Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn in Pisces, in the spring of A.U.C. 748, will not lead us to any more definite result.

Beginning of the Public Ministry

The date of the beginning of Christ's ministry may be calculated from three different data, found respectively in Luke 3:23; Josephus, "Bel. Jud" I, xxi, 1; or "Ant.", XV, ii, 1; and Luke 3:1.

The first of these passages reads: "And Jesus himself was beginning about the age of thirty years". The phrase "was beginning" does not qualify the following expression "about the age of thirty years", but rather indicates the commencement of the public life. As we have found that the birth of Jesus falls within the period A.U.C. 747-749, His public life must begin about A.U.C 777-779.

Second, when, shortly before the first Pasch of His public life, Jesus had cast the buyers and sellers out of the Temple, the Jews said: "Six and forty years was this temple in building" (John 2:20). Now, according to the testimony of Josephus (loc. cit.), the building of the Temple began in the fifteenth year of Herod's actual reign or in the eighteenth of his reign *de jure*, i.e. A.U.C. 732; hence, adding the forty six years of actual building, the Pasch of Christ's first year of public life must have fallen in A.U.C. 778.

Third, the Gospel of St. Luke (3:1) assigns the beginning of St. John the Baptist's mission to the "fifteenth year of the Tiberius Caesar". Augustus, the predecessor of Tiberius, died 19 August, 767 A.U.C., so that the fifteenth year of Tiberius's independent reign is 782 A.U.C.; but then Tiberius began to be the associate of Augustus in A.U.C. 764, so that the fifteenth year reckoned from this date falls in A.U.C. 778. Jesus Christ's public life began a few months later, i.e. about A.U.C. 779.

Relative Chronology

No student of the life of Jesus will question the chronological order of its principal divisions: infancy, hidden life, public life, passion, glory. But the order of events in the single divisions is not always clear beyond dispute.

Events in the 12th year of Jesus' life

This period in Jesus' life history is particularly important as it may give us a clue on what happened next after this elaborately described events at the age of twelve years. The readers can decide upon themselves if the reason of Jesus' hidden period between aged 13 to 29 given by the Church, is sound enough when they read how Jesus was active, intelligent and important to the Doctors of the Temple in the following descriptions.

It was in the seclusion of Nazareth that Jesus spent the greatest part of His earthly life. The inspired records are very reticent about this period: Luke, 2:40-52; Mark 6:3; John 6:42; 7:15, are about the only passages which refer to the hidden life. Some of them give us a general view of Christ's life: "The child grew, and grew in strength and wisdom; and the grace of God was in him" is the brief summary of the years following the return of the Holy Family after the ceremonial purification in the Temple. "Jesus advanced in wisdom, and age, and grace with God and men", and He "was subject to them" form the inspired outline of Christ's life in Nazareth after He had attained the age of twelve.[39]

"When he was twelve years old" Jesus accompanied His parents to Jerusalem, 'according to the custom of the feast'. When they returned, the child Jesus remained in Jerusalem; and his parents knew it not." After three days, they found him in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions." It was on this occasion that Jesus spoke the only words that have come down from the period of His hidden life: "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business [or, "in my father's house"]?" The Jews tell us that Jesus had not passed through the training of the rabbinic schools: "How doth this man know letters, having never learned?" The same question is asked by the people of Nazareth, who add, "Is not this the carpenter?" St. Justin is authority for the statement that Jesus specially made "ploughs and yokes' (Contra Tryph., 88).

Though it is not certain that at the time of Jesus elementary schools existed in the Jewish villages, it may be inferred from the Gospels that Jesus knew how to read (Luke 4:16) and write (John 8:6). At an early age He must have learned the so called *Shema* (Deut. 6:4), and the *Hallel*, or Psalms 113-118 (Hebr.); He must have been familiar with the other parts of the Scriptures too, especially the Psalms and the Prophetic Books, as He constantly refers to them in His public life. It is also asserted that Palestine at the time of Jesus Christ was practically bilingual, so that *Christ must have spoken Aramaic and Greek;* the indications that He was acquainted with Hebrew and Latin are rather slight. The public teaching of Jesus shows that He was a close observer of the sights and sounds of nature, and of the habits of all classes of men. For these are the usual sources of His illustrations. To conclude the hidden life of Jesus extending through thirty years is far different from what one should have expected in the case of a Person Who is adored by His followers as their God and revered as their Saviour; this is an indirect proof for the credibility of the Gospel story.

Whilst awaiting the fulfilment of Simons' prophecy, Mary was to have even then her share of sacrifice. She must soon flee into

Egypt, into an unknown land, to snatch her Son from the wrath of the tyrant Herod; she stays there until the Angel, after the king's death, bids Joseph retrace the road to Palestine. The Holy Family now takes up its abode at Nazareth. It is there that the life of Jesus is to be spent until the age of thirty, so much so that He will be called "Jesus of Nazareth."

The Gospel has preserved for us only one episode of this period of Christ's life: Christ lost in the Temple.

You know the circumstances that had taken the Holy Family to Jerusalem. The Child Jesus was twelve years old. It was the age when young Israelites began to be subject to the precepts of the Mosaic Law, notably which of going to the Temple three times a year, at the feasts of the Pasch, of Pentecost and of Tabernacles. Our Divine Saviour, who had willed, by His Circumcision, to bear the yoke of the Law, went then with Mary and His foster-father to the Holy City. It was doubtless the first time that He made this pilgrimage.

When this Boy entered into the Temple, none suspected that He was the God who was there adored. Jesus was there, mingling with the crowd of Israelites, taking part in the ceremonies of the worship and in the chanting of the psalms. He understood, as none other ever will, the significance of the sacred rites and the symbolism of this liturgy whereof God Himself had laid down the details. Jesus, seeing prefigured all that was to be accomplished in His Person, offered perfect praise to His Father in the name of all humanity. In this praise, God received homage infinitely worthy of Him.

"And having fulfilled the days," says the Evangelist, "the Child Jesus remained in Jerusalem, and His parents knew it not" (Lk 2:43). At the time of the Pasch the throng of Jews was very considerable, and, in returning, the caravans cannot have been easy to form, so it was not until late in the day that it could be recognized how they were composed. Moreover, according to the custom, the young people might join, as it pleased them, such or

such a group of their caravan. Mary believed that Jesus was with Joseph. She journeyed then in peace, singing the sacred hymns; above all she thought of Jesus, hoping soon to see Him again.

But what was her sorrowful surprise when, upon rejoining the group where Joseph was, she did not find the Child. Where was Jesus? Neither she nor Joseph could tell.

When God wills to lead a soul to the heights of perfection and contemplation, He makes her pass through great trials. Our Lord has said that when a branch united to Him, Who is the Vine, bears fruit, His Father purges it: *Purgabit eum.* And, why? "That it may bring forth more fruit": Ut *fructum plus afferat* (Jn 15:2). Spiritual darkness falls upon the soul. She feels forsaken by God who thus tries her in order to make her worthy of a closer and higher union with Himself. Mary knew Jesus too well to think that He had left them without some purpose. When would He return? Would she ever see Him again? She had not lived several years with Jesus at Nazareth without being aware that there was in Him an ineffable mystery. And this was for her at that moment a source of unequalled anguish. The Child must now be sought. What days were those! God permitted that our Lady should be in darkness during those anxious hours. She did not understand why Jesus had not forewarned her. Her sorrow was immense in being thus deprived of Him Whom she loved at once as her Son and her God.

Mary and Joseph returned to Jerusalem with troubled hearts. The Gospel tells us that they everywhere sought Jesus among their kinsfolk and acquaintance (Lk 2:44); but none of them had seen Him. Finally, you know how after three days they found Him in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors of the Law.

The Doctors of Israel assembled in one of the halls of the Temple to explain the Holy Scriptures. Anyone might come and join himself to the group of disciples and listeners. This is what Jesus did. He came into the midst of them, not to teach — the hour when He would present Himself to all as the one and only Lord Who had come to reveal the secrets from on high, had not yet struck; He

came there, like other young Israelites, among the doctors "hearing them, and asking them questions", as the Gospel tells us (Lk 46).

And what was the object of the Child Jesus in thus questioning the doctors of the Law? He wished, doubtless, to enlighten them, to lead them, by His questions and His replies, by the quotations that He made from the Scriptures, to speak of the coming of the Messiahs; to direct their search towards this point, so that their attention should be awakened as to the circumstances of the appearing of the promised Saviour. This is, apparently, what the Eternal Father willed of His Son, the mission that He gave Him to accomplish, and for which He caused Him to interrupt, for a short space of time, His hidden and silent life. And the doctors of Israel", were astonished at His wisdom and His answers ": *Stupebant... prudentia et responsis ejus* (Lk 2:47).

Thus, out of a life of thirty-three years, He who is eternal wisdom chose to pass thirty of these years in silence and obscurity, submission and labour.[78]

The Mystery of Christ's 30 Years of Hidden Life

The Church's version

For 30 years, Jesus lived a family life with Mary and Joseph in Nazareth. *St. Louis De Montfort* wrote: 'We must meditate on this astonishing reality and on its mere duration, for it represents the nine tenths of the life of the Son of God on earth.[79] Our good Master stooped to enclose himself in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, a captive but loving slave, and to make himself subject to her for thirty years.

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[78] The Hidden Years of Jesus Christ, and Christ in His Mysteries, Dom Columba Marmion, O.S.B. (Sands & Co., London, 1939) Ref.46 (http://www.cin.org/)
[79] St. Louis De Montfort Ref.47 (*http://www.mariedenazareth.com/ 1.0.html*)

As I said earlier, the human mind is bewildered when it reflects seriously upon this conduct of Incarnate Wisdom. He did not choose to give himself in a direct manner to the human race though he could easily have done so. He chose to come through the Virgin Mary. Thus he did not come into the world independently of others in the flower of his manhood, but he came as a frail little child dependent on the care and attention of his Mother.

Consumed with the desire to give glory to God, his Father, and save the human race, he saw no better or shorter way to do so than by submitting completely to Mary. He did this not just for the first eight, ten or fifteen years of his life like other children, but for thirty years. He gave more glory to God, his Father, during all those years of submission and dependence than he would have given by spending those working miracles, preaching far and wide, and converting all mankind. Otherwise he would have done all these things. What immeasurable glory then do we give to God when, following the example of Jesus, we submit to Mary! With such a convincing and well-known example before us, can we be so foolish as to believe that there is a better and shorter way of giving God glory than by submitting ourselves to Mary, as Jesus did? (St. Louis De Montfort)

This is the official account of the hidden years of Jesus. Is it logical to consider such an explanation as acceptable when we know that Jesus was very active before he disappeared from the public's eyes?

Research by scholars

Nicholas Notovitch's Discovery[80]

[80] The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ, Nicholas Notovtich 1894; Translated by J.H.Connelly & L.Landsberg ISBN 1-884956-41-6; Dragon Key Press 2005; ISBN 0-9761704-4-2 op cit

The literature search on Jesus and Tibet has yielded 80900 documents out of which 'The Lost Years of Jesus: The Life of the Saint Issa', translated by Nicholas Notovitch, was the outstanding reference regarding Jesus' hidden life story of seventeen years. Nicholas Notovitch, a Russian doctor who travelled extensively throughout Afghanistan, India, and Tibet published a book in French 'Vie inconnue de Jesus-Christ' in Paris, 1894. The English translation of his work by Elizabeth Claire Prophet is now published as 'The Lost Years of Jesus'.

During one of Notovitch's travels, he was visiting Leh, the capital of Ladakh in Kashmir he came across some old records and manuscripts of the Buddhist Hemis Monastery. He had an accident that resulted in a broken leg and had to stay awhile at Hemis convent, which gave him the unscheduled opportunity to come across those manuscripts.

There, he came across a Tibetan translation of the legend of Jesus Christ and had carefully noted in his carnet de voyage over two hundred verses from the curious document known as 'The Life of St. Issa.' He was shown two large volumes of the biography of St. Issa, yellowed and decayed by age.



Nicholas Notovitch

Notovitch enlisted a member of his party to translate the Tibetan volumes while he carefully noted each verse in the back pages of his journal. When he returned to the West, there was much controversy as to the authenticity of the document. He was accused of creating a hoax and was ridiculed as an impostor. In his defence, he encouraged a scientific expedition to prove the original Tibetan documents existed.

Verification by Swami *Abhenhananda*[81]



One of his sceptics was Swami *Abhendananda,* who journeyed into the ice cold Himalayas to the Hemis monastery, determined to expose him the fraud. His book of travels, called "*Kashmir O Tibetti*", related his visit to the Hemis gonpa where he also found the manuscript and had translated into Bengali, the two hundred and twenty four verses essentially the same as the Notovitch text. *Abhedananda* acknowledged the authenticity of the Issa legend. The book described about the life of Jesus from his fifteenth to his twenty ninth years, and how he came to Tibet with a caravan of traders where he studied the Vedas and the Buddhist Canon. He then, returned to Palestine through Persia to preach the Gospel. The account was originally said to have been taken down from the mouths of some Jewish merchants who came to India immediately after the Crucifixion (pp236) and it was written down in *Pali*. Afterwards, the scrolls were brought from India to Nepal and Makhada (Quaere: Mazadhe) in about 200 AD (pp236), and from Nepal to Tibet, and are presently preserved carefully at Lhasa. It was also mentioned that Tibetan translations of the *Pali* text were found in various Buddhist monasteries including the Hemis, which Notovitch had come across and had translated into French.

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[81] ***http://www.reluctant-messenger.com/main.htm***

What was Jesus doing during those hidden years?

We have seen that Jesus' life at his twelfth year was glamorously described, whilst his life for the following eighteen years was written only in a few lines serving his family. His life at his thirtieth year was also described in detail. So, what was Jesus really doing in those hidden years? The answer may not be simple and would be hard to verify, but an account of Jesus' life during those years is now published in English.

It was based upon the scrolls found at Hemis monastery by Notovitch in 1890s. The Myanmar translation of the account is found in a book on the debate between *Bhikkhu Ashin Ariya Dhamma* and the leaders of different faiths including the authorities of the Church in Bombay, which was chaired by the Barrister-at-Law, Dr Ambedkar. It has mentioned that Jesus was in Tibet during those hidden years.[82] The translation quoted Notovitch's work on the manuscripts found at Hemis monastery in 1894.

It was described that he went with a caravan of traders to Tibet in his quest for the truth. As he was a very active and inquisitive boy, he wanted to know why God did not create man equally. He raised that question to the authorities of the Temple, but nobody could give him a convincing answer. He came to learn the philosophy of *Kamma* and *Vipaka* from the trader and he wanted to know more about the subject. As the caravan was about to leave for Tibet, he did not tell anybody where he was going and followed the traders, despite their objection to Tibet (Jesus was lost in the temple at the age of 12 years during their visit to the feast with his parents. It was mentioned that he was found later, but it could also be a story made up to testify the subsequent hidden years of Jesus).

There in Tibet, he met the Lamas, and after much persuasion and a lengthy training as a novice, he was ordained and taught

[82] Questions & Answers on Buddhism, by Ashin Ariya Dhamma, a publication in Myanmar, translated by U Ko Gyi from English; abstracts of a symposium on multi-faiths in India. Chaired & edited by Ambedkar B.R (1891-1956)

Buddhism and *samatha* meditation. After that he asked the Lamas for an excuse to allow him to go back to his own people to teach what he has learnt. He left Tibet at the age of twenty-eight years against the will of the Lamas who foresaw Jesus' crucifixion. It has been described that the Lama asked him how to use an alternate approach if he faced opposition to his preaching, which is in absolute contradictory to the Old Testament in many aspects.

The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ

According to Notovitch's translation of the ancient manuscript[83] found at Himis convent, which was a copy in Tibetan from the original texts written in Pali;

When Issa (Jesus) had attained the age of thirteen years, the epoch when an Israelite should take a wife, (4:10) he was already famous for his edifying discoveries in the name of the Almighty (4:11).

Then, it was that Issa left the parental house in secret, departed from Jerusalem, and with the merchants set out towards Sind (4:12) with the object of perfecting himself in the Divine Word and of studying the laws of the great Buddhas (4:13).

In the course of his fourteenth year, the young Issa came to this side of Sind and established himself among the Aryas in the land beloved of God (5:1).

He went to Juggernaut in the country of Orissa, where the white priests of Brahma made him a joyous welcome (5:3), taught him to read and understand the Vedas. (5:4)

He passed six years at Juggernaut, at Rajagriha, at Benares, and in the holy cities, lived in peace with the Vaisyas and the Sudras,[84] whom he instructed in the Holy Scriptures. (5:5)

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[83] Nicholas Notovtich, *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ*. 1894. Dragon Key Press 2005; ISBN 0-9761704-4-2

[84] Two lower Hindu castes

The Brahmans and the Kshatriyas[85] told him that they were forbidden by the Para-Brahma to come near to those whom he had created from his side and feet (5:6), but Issa listened not to their discourses and betook him to the Sudras, preaching against the Brahmans and the Kshatriyas. (5:10)

Issa denied the divine origin of the Vedas and the Puranas. He taught the followers a law has already been given to man to guide him to his actions (5:12), to help the poor, support the weak, do ill to no one, and covet not that thou hast not and which thou seest belongeth to another. (5:27)

The white priests and the warriors, becoming acquainted with the discourses of Issa addressed to the Sudras, resolved upon his death and sent with this intent their servants to seek out the young prophet (6:1), but Issa, warned of his danger by the Sundras, left the neighbourhood of Juggernaut by night, reached the mountain, and established himself in the country of Gautamides, the birthplace of the great Buddha Sakyamuni,[86] in the midst of a people worshipping the one and sublime Brahma. (6:2)

After having perfected himself in the Pali language, the just Issa applied himself to the study of the sacred writings of the Sutras. (6:3)

Six years after, Issa, whom the Buddha had elected to spread his holy word, had become a perfect expositor of the sacred writings. (6:4)

Then, he left Nepal and the Himalayan mountains, descended into the valley of Rajputana, and went towards the west, preaching to diverse peoples the supreme perfection of man (6:5), which is-to do good to one's neighbour, being the sure means of merging oneself rapidly in the Eternal Spirit. (6:6)

[85] Two upper Hindu castes
[86] The present Buddha

It mentions that Issa had reached his twenty ninth year when he returned to the land of Israel through Persia, started preaching his new found wisdom from the East to the Israelites for three years, which aroused the suspicion of Pilate, the governor, as Issa was of a royal descent and was arrested for stirring up the people to rebellion after Pilate sent his disguised servants to watch him closely and reported him of Issa's actions.

The manuscript stated that the priests and elders whom Pilate had appointed as the judge did not condemn Issa as he was innocent, but that it was Pilate who sentenced him to death by crucifying along with the two thieves, which Notovitch claimed that this Buddhist information was on contrary to that of the orthodox Bible.

He also pointed out that it contained new information on Moses as a Pharaoh prince, which he claimed that the Buddhist information could be more reliable than the Bible and that of the old testament, Pentateuch, which was supposed to have written by Moses himself as there existed no writings in those countries bathed by the Mediterranean except Egyptian hieroglyphs and the cuneiform inscriptions.

Whereas, the alphabet and parchment were known and used in China and India, long before Moses.

He described that the doctrine of Buddha Gautama, who lived 600 years before Christ, was written on parchment in the Pali language. The two manuscripts read to him by the lama of the Himis Convent were compiled from diverse copies written in the Tibetan tongue, translated from rolls belonging to the Lassa library and brought from India, Nepal, and Maghada 200 years after Christ. These were placed in a convent standing on a Mount Marbour, near Lassa, where the Dalai Lama resided.



Hemis Monastery, Ladakh, Kashmir as it looked in 1876

(www.universalfellowshipoflight.org/jesus)




HEMIS GONPA
J&K TOURISM
HEMIS GONPA IS THE BIGGEST GONPA IN LADAKH. IT REPRESENTS DUKPA KANGYUTPA SCHOOL OF THE GREAT MAHAYANA CULTURE. HIS HOLINESS, GYALWANG DUKGCHEN RINPOCHE IS THE SUPREME HEAD OF THIS GONPA & SCHOOL. A GREAT SAGE GONBO DORJEY ESTABLISHED THE DUGPA SCHOOL IN LADAKH IN THE 13TH CENTURY. HE MEDITATED IN A CAVE ON THE SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN ABOVE THE GONPA, WHICH IS KNOWN AS GOTSANG. GOTSANG HAS ASSUMED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A SHRINE FOR DEVOTED PILGRIMS. THE GONPA WAS BUILT IN 1630 BY KUSHOK SHAMCHU NATH (1st STAGSANG RASPA) AN EMINENT SCHOLAR & THE RAJ GURU OF GYALPO SINGAY NAMGYAL LATER, AFTER THE YEAR 1750.
GYALSAS RINPOCHEY THE 3rd INCARNATION OF KUSHOK STAGSANG RASPA GAVE EXTENSION OF THE GONPA & BUILT SHRINES, CHAPELS, ERECTED STUPAS & ENRICHED THE GONPA WITH RELIGIOUS SCRIPTURES AND MURALS.
THERE ARE 500 RESIDENT MONKS IN THE GONPA. THE GONPA IS THE TREASURE HOUSE OF PRICELESS MANUSCRIPTS, EXQUISITE PAINTING, SUPERB THANKAS, RARE IMAGE & PRECIOUS OBJECTS.
THERE ARE THREE BIG ASSEMBLY HALL MANY SHRINES & CHAPELS INCULDING THE HOUSE OF DEITIES & GONKHANG AN ALTER DEDICATED TO THE GUARDIAN DIVINITIES. THE ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF THE GONPA IS CELEBRATED ON THE 10TH & 11TH OF THE 5TH MONTH OF THE LADAKH LUNAR CALENDAR WHICH FALL IN JUNE & JULY.
DONATION ARE WELCOMED. THE AMOUNT WE RECEIVE IS SPENT FOR THE REPAIRS AND RENOVATION OF THE GONPA.
PLEASE GIVE IN CHEQUE OR DRAFT TO THE MANAGER OR THE SECRETARY OF THE GONPA AND OBTAIN A RECEIPT.
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
HEMIS GONPA, LEH - LADAKH 6TH 7TH JULY-06

The Secret Teachings of Jesus

We now know that the Bible seen today has been changed and the real teaching of Jesus might have been altered. The real teaching of Jesus is said to have been preserved in ancient texts of the early Christians, known as the Gnostic Gospels that are available at the Nag Hammadi Library in Egypt. It houses the ancient manuscripts that have survived the destruction by the Church during its early period of reforming Christianity.

Among its collection, four Gnostic Gospels are of most significant to our study; *(1) The Secret Book of James; (2) The Gospel of Thomas; (3) The Book of Thomas, and (4) the Secret Book of John*, which were discovered in December 1945 in Egypt by farmers who were digging for natural fertilizer along the base of the magnificent cliffs that grace the Nile River as it flows around the great river bend in Upper Egypt. The followers of this Christian Sect are known as

the 'Gnostics' or the knowledge seekers that have half cooked Buddhist philosophy and their Gospels have been destroyed by the Orthodox Christian Church during the early period of Christianity.

The book mentions that the papyrus codex (book) containing the Gospel of Judas was found by farmers in Egypt in the 1970s, was bought and sold by antiquities traders, hidden away in a safety deposit box for many years, and carried across three continents, all the while suffering damage that reduced much of it to fragments, and only in 2001 it finally found its way into the hands of a team of experts who had painstakingly reassembled more than 1000 pieces and restored it. In addition to radio carbon dating, the manuscript was also authenticated through ink analysis, multispectral imaging, content and linguistic style and handwriting style, National Geographic reported. The word Gospel comes from two words, God=good and Spel=news or tidings, the good news or the accounts of the life and death of Jesus related by his disciples, which form the canon of Christianity.

There are altogether four Gospels in “orthodox” (correct belief) Christianity, censored and edited by one of the great authors of the early Christian Church: St Irenaeus, the bishop of Lugdunum in Gaul (Lyon in modern France) around 180AD which are the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke & John that most people know today. There are twelve disciples of Jesus, Judas Iscariot being one of them whom had been replaced by Matthias (Acts 1:15-26) after he betrayed Jesus by selling him to his persecutors.

It is known that there are many other alternate Gospels written by other disciples and accomplices of Jesus; viz. Judas Thomas (Jesus’ twin brother, Matthew 13:55; discovered in 1945 in Egypt), Philip; Mary Magdalene (discovered in 1896), and recently, the Gospel of Judas Iscariot, but they were removed from the New Testament and were destroyed as they were regarded as heresy (false doctrine) by the Early Church.

These writings are also known as Gnosticism (Greek word gnosis = knowledge). Gnostics are those who are “in the know” or in other words who know the secrets that can bring salvation.

They believe that a person is saved not by having faith in Christ or by doing good works, but by knowing the truth--the truth about the world we live in, about who the true God is, and especially about who we ourselves are. In other words Gnostics have a philosophy somewhat similar to the Buddhists, but they believe in heavenly home as permanent and in the God and in the existence of an eternal soul. According to most Gnostics, this material world is not our home; we are trapped here, in these bodies of flesh, and we need to learn how to escape. They understood this world, with all its evils and distractions, to be a deadly trap for one who seeks knowledge. Moreover, the divine spirit is imprisoned by the passions of the sensual soul and the elements of the fleshy body.[87]

In order to be liberated, then the spirit needs to be awakened and brought to sobriety, wholeness, knowledge and enlightenment. This transformation in one’s life, Gnostics maintained, is accomplished through a call from God-the God without and within-to discover true knowledge and rest. For Gnostic Christians, the source of the divine call is Christ.

In these Gnostic Gospels all form of the work are described, in the title or the opening of the text, as secret teachings of the saviour, and reliable followers of Jesus (his brother James; Judas Thomas, referred by some sources as Jesus’ twin brother; or the spiritual disciple, John) some as guarantors of the secret traditions.

Although the precise dating of ancient documents is notoriously difficult, the four Gnostic Gospels seem to have been written around the second century C.E, about the same time when the four Gospels of the orthodox Christianity were compiled. The

[87] The Secret Teachings of Jesus, the Four Gnostic Gospels; edited by M .Meyer; First Vintage Books edition June 1986. ISBN 0-394-74433-0 (Ref: 48)

Secret Book of James and the Gospel of Thomas, probably being earlier than the Book of Thomas and the Secret Book of John, all preserve older materials, and some of the recorded sayings of the Saviour may go back to the historical Jesus.

A carbon-14 analysis of the Gospel of Judas, which is a part of the Gnostic Gospels, done at the University of Arizona dated the codex to around the last quarter of the third century (give or take a few decades). The traditional method of comparing its design and the form of writing with other datable papyrus codices, such as those preserved within the Nag Hammadi library indicates a date in the first half of the fourth century.

The original Greek text of the Gospel of Judas could have been written prior to AD180 since it was quoted by Irenaeus in his famous treatise Detection and Overthrow of the False Knowledge, commonly entitled Against Heresies. It states that advocates, including Judas Iscariot, of Cain, the wicked brother of Abel, composed the Gospel of Judas. They are known as Cainites, probably a nickname dubbed by Irenaeus and other heresiologists (heresy hunters), were regarded as the champions of some of the notorious characters in the biblical literature.

From these Gnostic Gospels we can safely surmise that Jesus has harboured more or less similar beliefs of those of the Buddhists who are not yet enlightened and have an element of Atta [88] or the belief in soul, which is not surprising since we hypothesised him to be a Bodhisatta, a future Buddha who has not yet enlightened and do not know the whole Noble Truths of the present Buddha. However, it strengthens the hypothesis of his divine plan to fulfil the last perfection to become the future Buddha.

[88] Attama in Hinduism, or the eternal soul in all other faiths

Evidence on Jesus as a *Bodhisatta*

The Qualities of Jesus

We have seen U Chit Tin's discussion on the qualities of a *Bodhisatta.*[89] Out of the eight qualifications necessary for a *Bodhisatta* we can identify at least six, which are as follows: a human (*manussatta*), male (*lingasampatti*), who has gone forth (*pabbajja*) as an ascetic believing in righteousness and in the doctrine of cause and effects (you reap what you sow), has achieved the noble qualities (*gutasampatti*) as evidenced by his miracles, has a strong desire (*chanda*) for his cause and has also a great dedication (*adhikara*) to fulfil his mission by sacrificing on the cross without loosing his patience and compassion.

The only two qualifications that we could not verify are the cause (*hetu*) which he might have it at the time he acquired the aspiration, and the Teacher (*sattharadassana*) on whom he aspired for was a living Buddha or not. To surmise on the evidence we consider that it is enough for us to believe that Jesus is a *Bodhisatta* on the logical grounds that he has 75% of the requirements.

It is quite evident that Jesus has gone forth since the age of thirty (according to the Bible), and probably earlier if Notovitch's story and the assertion of the Hemis scrolls are true.[90] We can accept the fact that Jesus believed in the cause and effect philosophy (*Kamma/Vipaka*) when we went through the Sermon on the Mount[91] where he preached the parable.

We have no doubts on Jesus' acquirement of nobility by looking at the miracles he had performed.[92] Jesus has practiced

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[89] *The Coming Buddha, Ari-Metteya* Sayagyi U Chit Tin (http://ubakhin.com)
[90] *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ* Nicholas Notovtich 1894; Dragon Key Press 2005; ISBN 0-9761704-4-2
[91] Matthew The Sermon on the Mount, New International Version NIV, *Gospelcom.net; www.BibleGateway.com*. op cit
[92] The Life and Teachings of Jesus & his Apostles, op cit

concentration meditation, probably *samatha*, and has acquired *abhinna* enabling him to perform miracles. The evidence of Jesus practicing *samatha* meditation may be witnessed in the following passage of the Bible. 'And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, and had communed with God, he was afterwards in hungered, and was left to be tempted of the devil.' (Matthew4:1, 2 Inspired version has added the Italics)

This episode is elaborated in detail by John Worldpeace[93] who pointed out the resemblance of Jesus' experience to that of *Siddhattha Gotama* before the enlightenment. Jesus fasted for forty days and was hungry. The accuser (devil) said, 'If you are the son of God, tell this stone to become bread.' But Jesus answered, 'It is written, "No one lives by bread alone." Then, the accuser took him to Jerusalem and placed him at the highest point of the temple and said to him, if you are the son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, "He will command his angels to protect you", and "They will carry you with their hands so that your foot will not strike a stone."' But, Jesus answered him: 'It is written' - "You shall not put the lord your God to the test." Then, the accuser took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour, and he said to him, All these, I will give you, if you will do obeisance and reverence me. But, Jesus answered him: 'It is written' - "You shall reverence the lord your God and serve him alone." Then, the accuser left him.

The above passage provides the evident that the devil or Mara or anyone of the opposition had tempted Jesus in order to break his faith (*Saddha*), his fasting (*Sila*), his concentration (*Samadhi*), and to be tempted by the wealth and power of a king if he were to stop what he was doing. This is a typical phenomenon when somebody is about to achieve something noble, an insight, *Jhana* or *Abhinna*, Arahatship or Buddhahood, which is well described in the Theravada scriptures.

[93] http://www.johnworldpeace.com

Although we could not find quotations from the Bible that directly mention Jesus doing *samatha* meditation, we can safely surmise that he did so when we found that he was fasting and thinking for forty days in solitude, which is meditation in Buddhist sense. Moreover, the ability to perform miracles after such a practice could not be anything else, but *samatha* meditation. We say that it is *samatha* because those who have practiced pure *vipassana* do not have *abhinna* to perform such miracles as Jesus, even if they have reached *Arahattamagga*, the sainthood. It is well described in the Theravada literature.

Miracles shown by Jesus[94]

After this meditation, Jesus started to show numerous miracles, like walking on water, healing the sick and dead, feeding the crowd only with a single loaf of bread and a jug of wine etc. There are altogether 43 miracles recorded in the Gospels. The first miracle is water converted into wine (John 2:1-11). The episode of Jesus walked on the sea is described in the Gospels (Matt. 14:24-33; Mark 6:47-52; John 6:16-21). There is a record of Jesus healed the sick in ten episodes (John 4:46-54; Matt. 8:14, 15; Mark 1:29-31: Luke 4:38-39; etc.). Jesus also cured the blind in four episodes (Matt. 9:27-31; Mark 8:22-26; John 9:1-7; & Matt. 20, Mark 10, Luke 18:35-34); the deaf with impediment of speech in two episodes (Mark 7: 32-37; Matt. 12:22, 23); the dumb in two episodes (Matt. 9:32-34; Luke 11:14-26); and the lepers in two episodes (Matt. 8, Mark 1, Luke 5:17-26; Luke 17:11-19).

He has also said to have raised the dead (or comatose) in three episodes (John 11:17-46; Matt. 9, Mark 5, Luke 8:41-56; Luke 7:7-17). Jesus also has shown his ability to still the storm (Matt. 8, Mark 4, Luke 8:22-25) passes through the crowd unseen in two episodes (John 8:59; Luke 4:28-30); feed five thousand people (Matt. 14, Mark 6, Luke 9, John 6:1-14), four thousand people (Matt. 15:29-38; Mark 8:1-9), and has done many other miracles. (The Life and Teachings of Jesus & his Apostles; Appendix B, pp. 481)

[94] The Life and Teachings of Jesus & his Apostles, op cit

Did Jesus practice meditation?

It may be taken as an indirect evidence on this question, if we look at Jesus' retreat on the mount in solitude fasting and thinking for forty days, which he could be doing meditation. There is also evidence on meditation as taught by Jesus. Jesus here exercises his powers of seer ship. From the fragmentary account preserved in the scripture it is apparent that Nathanael had undergone some surpassing spiritual experience while praying, or meditating, or worshiping under a fig tree. The Lord and giver of all things spiritual, though absent in body, had been seen by Nathanael in spirit; and the guileless Israelite, seeing this manifestation odd seer ship, was led to accept Jesus as the Messiah.' (McConkie, DNTC, 1:134,)

Moreover, there have been a few reports of those who practised transcendental meditation in India mentioning about experiences while they were in jhanas, where they came across Jesus practising meditation.

In north India on the Ganges River in the Himalayas, about an hour up-river from Rishikesh, is a cave called Vashishta Guha. Made famous by the ancient sage Vashishta, it has been the home to yogis for centuries, most recently the renowned Swami Purushottamananda. About a five-minute walk down-river from this cave is another cave known as the "Jesus cave." Set in the side of a sheer cliff on the banks of the Ganga, the cave has a spectacular view of the river and the surrounding peaks of the Himalayas. The cave derived its name from the tradition that Jesus spent time there during His sojourn in India during the "Lost Years." In the last century both Swami Rama Tirtha and Swami (Papa) Ramdas lived there (at separate times), and had visions of Jesus meditating there, though they had no prior knowledge of His having lived there. The tradition of the Jesus Cave is but a small part of the lore of Jesus' stay in India. To read more of the evidence of Jesus' time in India, read the in-depth article, The Christ of India, by Swami Nirmalananda Giri.



This cave is believed to have been used by Jesus to meditate while he was in India

Bodhisattva Maitreya, from Gandhara. Late second century AD



Jesus' appearance in flesh and blood among a crowd of worshippers in Nairobi, Kenya in June 1988

The stupa, which is a private collection of William H. Woeff, New York, has the typical headdress, the hair arrangements in the 'Two-looped style', long hair falling on the shoulders; a tied waist band and the Nagakesara flower in the left hand which are typical iconographical features of Maitreya
Jesus appeared to be wearing a similar tunic and a head dress that was depicted in the stupa

Maitreya **in Nairobi**

On 11 June 1988, a man suddenly appeared before a vast crowd in Nairobi, Kenya, gathered to witness healing prayers. Instantly recognizing the tall, white-robed figure as "Jesus Christ," the crowds fell down overcome with emotion. The editor of the Swahili edition of the Kenya Times, veteran journalist Job Mutungi, witnessed the event and took some pictures. A summary of his article as it appeared in his newspaper follows.
About 6,000 worshippers at Muslim Village, Kawangware, Nairobi, believe they saw Jesus Christ, in broad daylight last week.
The scene was at the Church of Bethlehem, where Mary Sinaida Akatsa conducts miracle prayers, praying for the sick, the blind, cripples, mad people, and the barren.
Worshippers were singing Mungu ni Mwema, a popular Swahili hymn, when Mary Akatsa interjected. She announced that God had spoken to her and told her to "await a miracle because a very important guest would be coming to give her a very vital message."

Five minutes later, she asked those who were singing to stop as the messenger had arrived. "Jesus! Jesus! Jesus of Nazareth!" went the loud whispers from the crowd as they raised up their hands in divine welcome.

The tall figure of a barefooted white-robed and bearded man appeared from nowhere and stood in the middle of the crowd. He was walking slowly towards the new church building away from the tent. Mary walked with him, side by side. I stared at the stranger without blinking. Strange,

sporadic light wafted on top of his turbaned head, his feet and his entire body.

In clear Swahili, which had no traces of accent, the strange man announced that the people of Kenya were blessed, especially those who had gathered at the venue that afternoon.

"We are nearing the time for the reign of heaven. But before that I shall come back and bring a bucketful of blessings for all of you," the man said.

It took the crowd nearly 20 minutes to recover after the man left the meeting in a car belonging to a Mr Gurnam Singh, who offered to give him a lift. But it will probably take Mr Singh his lifetime to recover from the shock he got two minutes later. On reaching the bus terminus, the man informed Mr Singh to stop the car. On getting out, he walked a few paces beside the road and simply vanished into thin air.

Why didn't Jesus avoid being crucified?

If Jesus was God as believed by his followers, and he was meant to know everything, why didn't he avoid being crucified?

According to the Gospels, Jesus predicted his arrest and crucifixion in Jerusalem. 'The Son of man will be handed over to his enemies and nailed to a cross,' he once said (Matthew26:2). If anything, Jesus seems almost to have deliberately provoked his arrest by his riotous behaviour in the temple, rather than avoiding it. This can be taken as the evidence for us that he had the dedication (*adhikara*) and a strong desire (*chandata*) for his mission.

Why? Jesus was evidently convinced that his death was an essential part of God's plan. He talked about his 'blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many (Mark 14:24), and about coming 'to give his life as a ransom for many' (Mark 10:45). He

seems to have recognized that his death was a necessary part of what he had come to do, not something to be avoided.[95]

Recently an ancient manuscript, The Gospel of Judas has been published by the National Geographic Society.

It is edited by Rodolphe Kasser[96], Marvvin Meyer[97], and Gregor Wurst [98] and contains information that would support the hypothesis that Jesus purposely faced the crucifixion, and that he disclosed his true identity to Judas Iscariot, one of his twelve disciples whom he had entrusted with his secrets.

It mentions that Jesus had asked Judas Iscariot personally to hand him over to the Jewish authorities so that he could fulfil his Divine Plan. In it Jesus had said to have disclosed his secrets to some of his specially selected disciples, stating that he came from a heavenly abode, which surpassed all other realms, even the realm of the God that created the world that is full of suffering.[99] He said the God is within you and one needs to purify oneself to unite with the God.[100] He also mentioned that he would go back to that realm after he had fulfilled the Divine Plan!

The followers of this Christian Sect are known as the 'Gnostics' or the knowledge seekers that have half cooked Buddhist philosophy and their Gospels have been destroyed by the Orthodox Christian Church during the early period of Christianity.

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[95] *www.rejesus.co.uk/the_story/question_answer/faqs/who.html*

[96] Professor Emeritus in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Geneva, Switzerland.

[97] Griset Professor of Bible & Christian Studies at Chapman University, Orange, California

[98] Professor of History of Christianity in the Faculty of Catholic Theology of the University of Augsburg, Germany

[99] The Gospel of Judas edited by R. Kasser, M. Meyer & G. Wurst. National Geographic Society 2006. ISBN-00:1-4262-0042-0 (Ref. 49)

[100] A Brahmin belief which Jesus/Issa might have acquired during his stay for six years in Juggernaut, Rajagriha, Benares, India and studied the Vedas. The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ, Nicholas Notovtich 1894; Dragon Key Press 2005; ISBN 0-9761704-4-2 op cit

The book mentions that the papyrus codex (book) containing the Gospel of Judas was found by farmers in Egypt in the 1970s, was bought and sold by antiquities traders, hidden away in a safety deposit box for many years, and carried across three continents, all the while suffering damage that reduced much of it to fragments, and only in 2001 it finally found its way into the hands of a team of experts who had painstakingly reassembled more than 1000 pieces and restored it. In addition to radio carbon dating, the manuscript was also authenticated through ink analysis, multispectral imaging, content and linguistic style and handwriting style, National Geographic reported.

If Jesus had deliberately led himself to an agonizing death on the cross, and yet did not curse his persecutors, could he be fulfilling his perfection on *Khanti parami*, the endurance and patience, and loving kindness perfection (*Metta parami*). This would be the final piece of evidence on him as a *Bodhisatta*, without any doubt.

Did Jesus claim to be God?

As far as they are concerned, the researchers of the Bible[101] revealed that Jesus never, in so many words, said: "I am God". This is why some groups, such as the Jehovah's Witness, who believe in every word of the Bible, do not believe that Jesus was God.

Where did the mainstream church get the idea from in the first place?

They were trying to make sense of the extraordinary things Jesus said and did. He said that he forgave people's sins; something which Jews believed could only be done by God. He claimed the right to rework God's (mosaic) Law. He explained his mission by telling stories about God visiting Israel. There are implications here, which were bewildering to his followers and blasphemous to his opponents that Jesus believed God to be present in him in a unique way. This is exactly what was written in the *www.rejesus* website, a

[101] www.rejesus.co.uk/the_story/question_answer/faqs/who.html

Christian propaganda. It has somehow acknowledged that Jesus is not the God, but could he be something else? A *Bodhisatta*, perhaps![102]

Jesus' Next appearance on Earth

"The Son of Man cometh"— Matt. 24:44

The following descriptions have been quoted from Christ in His Mysteries, by Dom Columba Marmion.[103] There is a great deal in the Bible about the second coming of Jesus. Someone has said that the second coming of our Lord is mentioned one hundred and twenty times in the New Testament. Another has said that four per cent of the New Testament is given to this one subject. Still another has said that one verse out of every twenty-six in the entire Bible mentions the second coming of Christ. *The Book of Revelation* is devoted almost entirely to the second coming of Christ; the Song of Solomon treats of the preparation of the Bride. We have, therefore, an abundance of Scripture from which we may glean thoughts for this book.

At the head of this chapter we have the simple statement, "The Son of Man cometh." If we had no other Scripture, we should expect the Son of Man to come. One jot or one title of God's Word is as sure as God Himself. It can never fail. Jesus said, "The Son of Man cometh," and this would be sufficient if we had no other Scripture, but other Scriptures we have. "They shall see the Son of Man coming."—Matt. 24: 30. "Your Lord doth come,"—Ver. 42. "The lord of that servant shall come."—Ver. 50. "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh."—Matt. 25: 6. "When the Son of Man shall come?" —Matt. 25: 31.

Surely, this number of quotations from just the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew should prove to anyone the

[102] *www.rejesus.co.uk/the_story/question_answer/faqs/who.html* op cit
[103] *http://www.pctii.org/arc/taylor/taylor2l.html*

certainty of the coming of Jesus. No one can say that these Scriptures refer to the first coming of Jesus, for Jesus Himself spoke these words while on earth the first time.

Some tell us that these words refer to the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. If this be true, what about the following quotation from 1 Cor. 1: 7: "So that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"? Here is another: "We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."—Phil. 3: 20. Both of these verses were written after the day of Pentecost, and they put His coming in the future. So these words of Jesus cannot refer to the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Others think that all the Scriptures about the coming of the Lord refer to the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus in AD 70. Such teachers substitute Titus for the Lord. However, if this is probable, what shall we do with Rev. 22: 12: "Behold, I come quickly"? Jesus spoke these words twenty-six years after the destruction of Jerusalem. So we are driven to look elsewhere for the coming of the Lord.

Some tell us that the coming of the Lord into a heart in conversion is the second coming of the Lord. Yet, we read in Rev. 1: 7, "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him." He certainly does not come this way every time a soul is born from above.

Another popular theory is that all the Scriptures speaking of the second coming of Christ refer to death. I would ask the advocates of this to read 1 Thess. 4: 16, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise first." Some one informs me that what is meant by the dead rising is the person who is dying going up to heaven. Look at verse 17. "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." So if the coming of the Lord refers to death, then every time a person goes to heaven, those who are alive go with him.

It seems to me that no rational person could believe other than that Jesus is to come in person to this earth again. As a further proof, however, and to more firmly establish our faith, let us read the words of the heavenly messengers unto the men of Galilee. “This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”—Acts 1: 11.

Before we close this chapter we wish to give you a prospectus of what we teach in the following pages.

The wicked will grow worse until Jesus comes; the righteous, at least a part of them, will grow better. Some day, without any warning, the trump of God will sound, Jesus will pass around the world as lightning, and those who are alive and are ready for His coming, with all who died ready for His coming, will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

The Great Tribulation will then set in. Tribulation such as men have never seen before will come upon the inhabitants of the earth. Just how long these will continue, I am unable to say. During The Great Tribulation the saints will be in the air preparing for the Marriage of the Lamb. The Marriage and the Marriage Supper take place just before the close of The Tribulation.

During The Tribulation, the Antichrist will be manifested. At the close of The Tribulation, Jesus rides down from heaven on a white horse, followed by the armies of heaven on white horses, captures the Antichrist, and casts him into the lake of fire. He then lays hold on the devil and binds him in the pit for a thousand years. During these thousand years, Jesus reigns King over the whole earth, having His throne in Jerusalem.

The Millennium will be a time of great peace and prosperity to the inhabitants of the earth. At the close of the thousand years Satan will be loosed for a little season, will go out upon the face of the earth, and will find many followers. He will deceive many, and will cause them to come in battle array against Christ and His Throne. After Satan and his followers have gathered about Jerusalem, fire falls upon them, and they are swept away. Satan is

cast into the lake of fire, and all the wicked are brought to judgment. The wicked, having been judged and resurrected are cast into the lake of fire. All things that offend are taken out of the earth, and the earth is made new. The Holy City, New Jerusalem, comes down and hangs over the earth. This city will be the palace of the Queen. Nations will be born, and the earth will abide forever. "The earth abideth forever."— Eccl. 1:4

The second coming of Christ - a different perspective[104]

We came across another description on this topic from a different perspective. Bahai' Religion (see 2.2.2.5.2) is based upon the belief in Creator God and the combination of prophecies made by Judaism, Islam, Christianity and Buddhism on the future appearance of a messiah. The following are the quotations of their website.[105]

The second Christ, Baha'u'llah has already come, and He fulfils the prophecies for the Prince of Peace.

First, let's look at where Baha'u'llah was prophesied by name from the lips of no less than Jesus Himself. Now if Jesus tells us that Baha'u'llah is coming, who is it to say that He's wrong? What Christian could say that He didn't know what He's talking about? If He says Baha'u'llah is going to come, why would anybody say anything different.

Jesus prophesied Baha'u'llah by name in Mark 8:38:

For whosoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. (See also Matthew16:27, Luke 9: 26).

Jesus spoke Aramaic--the language of the Middle East in His time. So when Jesus spoke of the "Glory of the Father," he didn't

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[104] St. Louis De Montfort (***http://www.mariedenazareth.com/ 1.0.html***) op cit

[105] The Proofs For Baha'u'llah (Taken from a BUPC transcribe of Dr. Leland Jensen's fireside class***) http:// www.alaska.net/~peace/ bahaullah.htm***

use the English for this but rather the Aramaic word, which is "Baha'u'llah."

Jesus says the "Son of man" is, going to return in "Baha'u'llah," meaning that this "glory of the Father" is going to be a man--the son of a man--and He's going to have holy angels. These holy angels are those that were martyred for the sake of Baha'u'llah's Revelation, just as the apostles were martyred at the time of Jesus.

This is like the name prophecy for Jesus, in which He was prophesied to come as "Immanuel," and He came in the name "Jesus" which meant the same thing in a different language. In our Bible we have the words "Glory of the Father," which means the same as 'Baha'u'llah" and is the way to say glory of God Father in Arabic Persian and Aramaic language Jesus spoke (Baha=glory, u =short for Allah, Father).

Metteyya has to appear at a time when catastrophic events are overtaking the earth.

"This 'end of an age' inevitably produces a certain number of natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes, and we are seeing a dramatic climax in the number of disasters taking place around the world. *Metteyya* says: 'The last time I came, as Jesus, it was written in the Bible that when I appeared again the very elements of nature would be disturbed.' "After the disasters have peaked there will come a period of calm - the violence and destruction will come to an end. As people gain awareness, their guilt will recede..."[106]

[106] Metteyya's Mission, Volume Two, *Benjamin Creme*, Share International Foundation, 1993, pp186-187 Ref.50

Evidence gathered on the Bodhisatta Metteyya in his last existence in Tusita

The only piece of evidence that we can find in the Theravada texts regarding the last existence of the *Bodhisata Metteyya* is in the *Mahavamsa.*[107] The *Bodhisatta Metteyya* is waiting in the *Tusita* heaven until his return to earth, is worshipped in Ceylon since ancient times (*Mahavamsa* (xxxii 73). *Mahavamsa*, the Great Chronicle of Lanka from 6th Century BC to 4th Century AD was translated from *Pali* by Wilhelm Geiger. It describes a lot of accounts of the Buddha's period as well as that of the post Buddha era. Therefore, it is not easy to ascertain if that quotation was described before Jesus' period as it contains information dating from the 6th century BC to the 4th century AD.

We have checked the translations of the *Asoka* stone edicts[46] for any source of information on the *Bodhisatta Metteyya*. *Asoka* was born in about 304 B.C. and became the third king of the *Maurya* dynasty after the death of his father, *Bindusara*. His was mostly known as *Asoka* but he assumed the title *Devanat Piyadassa*, which means "Beloved-of-the-Gods, He who looks on with affection." *Asoka* died in 232 BC, in the thirty-eighth year of his reign.

Asoka's edicts are to be found scattered in more than thirty places throughout India, Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Most of them are written in *Brahmin* script from which all Indian scripts and many of those used in Southeast Asia were developed. The language used in these edicts found in the eastern part of the Indian sub-continent is a type of *Magadha*, probably the official language of *Asoka's* court. The language used in the edicts found in the western part of India is closer to Sanskrit although one bilingual edict in Afghanistan is written in Aramaic and Greek. (Jesus was thought to be bilingual, both in Aramaic and Greek).

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[107] *MahÈvaÑsa*, the Great Chronicle of Lanka, op cit

Asoka's edicts, which comprise the earliest decipherable corpus of written documents from India, have survived throughout the centuries because they are written on rocks and stone pillars. These rocks and pillars in particular are testimony to the technological and artistic genius of ancient Indian civilization.

We have checked the translations of the Fourteen Rock Edicts, the Kalinga Rock Edicts, Minor Rock Edicts, the Seven Pillar Edicts, and the Minor Pillar Edicts, but unfortunately, there is no information on the *Bodhisatta Metteyya* in the *Tusita*. If we were to find any piece of information mentioning the *Bodhisatta Metteyya* in *Tusita*, the hypothesis would have been nullified unequivocally.

When we look for the information from the Mahayana texts and we found the descriptions of *Bodhisatta Maitreya*/*Metteyya* in abundance. The following descriptions are taken from a *Mahayana* website in geocities.com.

In the 1st century AD, we see major changes in the religions and worships of India. One of the major religious developments is the Mahayana sect of Buddhism. Today, this is the dominant division of Buddhism and is best seen in China and Japan. The original form of Buddhism is called *"Theravada"*, which is followed in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries.

An important development in Mahayana Buddhism was the belief in a *Bodhisatta*, or divine saviour. *Bodhisattva* (Sanskrit) or *Bodhisatta* in *Pali* (one whose essence is *Bodhi* [enlightenment]), the historical Buddha, *Gotama* prior to his enlightenment; also, other individuals who are destined to become Buddhas in this or in another life. *Metteyya* in Buddhist tradition, the future Buddha, presently a *Bodhisatta*, residing in the *Tusita* heaven who will descend to earth to preach anew the *Dhamma* (law) when the teachings of *Gotama* Buddha have completely decayed. *Metteyya* is the earliest *Bodhisatta* around whom a cult developed and is mentioned in scriptures from the 3rd century AD. All schools of

Buddhism accepted him and it is still the only *Bodhisatta* generally honoured by the *Theravada* tradition.

The word *Maitreya* is derived from the Sanskrit *maitri* ("friendliness"). In *Pali* the word becomes *Metteyya*, in Chinese *Mi-lo-fo*, in Japanese *Miroku*, and in Mongolian *Maidari*; in Tibetan the *Bodhisatta* is known as *Byams-pa* ("kind," or "loving"). His worship was especially popular during the 4th to 7th century, and his images are found throughout the Buddhist world; many of them beautifully convey his characteristic air of expectancy and promise. He is represented in painting and sculpture both as a *Bodhisattva* and as a Buddha, and he is frequently depicted seated in European fashion or with his ankles loosely crossed.

So far, all evidence from literature and iconological inscriptions indicates the date of Metteya's final residence in Tusita around first century AD, and no evidence is available to nullify the hypothesis we are trying to prove.

Descriptions on the future Buddha Metteyya

Out of the three Buddha categories, the future Buddha *Ariya Metteyya* is of the energy/effort (*viriya*) predominant type who needs to fulfil the ten perfections four times longer than the present *Gotama* Buddha who is of the wisdom (*panna*) predominant type. *Bodhisatta Metteyya* had the prediction that he would become a Buddha one day from the Buddha *Mahutta* according to a 16th century *Pali* text from Thailand.[20] It was much earlier than the present Buddha, but he would become a Buddha only after *Gotama* Buddha and would have to strife much harder as he is of the energy/effort predominant type. However, he would enjoy many privileges than the present Buddha since he had fulfilled the perfections much longer and harder.

He would become a Buddha when human life span is 80,000 years and he would live for 82, 000 years. This may appear to be mythical, but if science has developed further to overcome ageing

(chromosomes undergo a stocking effect when aged) humans may live much longer than at present. He would go forth at the age of 8000 years and would become enlightened by striving only seven days compared to six years for the present Buddha. He would have an entourage of disciples in thousands compared to hundreds for the present Buddha. Everything would be much grander and with more splendour than *Gotama* Buddha, and life on earth would be like in Heaven as told in the Bible.

According to U Chit Tin's article[108], the prediction by the present Buddha, concerning *Metteyya* is found in the *Pali* canon. The *Dasavatthu* mentioned that from the time of the sure prediction, the *Bodhisatta* (*Ajita*) taught a large number of *bhikkhus*, explaining the whole canon and causing them to increase in insight and to attain the knowledge of "adaptable patience". At the end of that life, he (*Ajita*) was reborn in a *Deva* world. But there is a reference (D, No. 26 (DB, III, 72-74; TS, pp. 364-368) to at least another human life as he should have a life in which (he should fulfil another perfection) he is as much as in the way the *Bodhisatta Vessantara* (the present Buddha) fulfilled the perfection of generosity exceedingly by giving away even his own children when a Brahmin asked for them for slavery.(28) After that life, the *Bodhisatta Metteya* would be reborn in the *Tusita Deva* world, where all Great *Bodhisatta*s reside before their final birth. According to the *Culavamsa*, the *Bodhisatta* might have other human births after his documented life story as *Bhikkhu Ajita* during the present Buddha's lifetime.

When *Bodhisatta Metteyya* is reborn in the human world, life on earth will be like life in a *Deva* world. Women will marry at the age of five hundred. There will only be three ailments: desire (to eat) (*iccha*), sluggishness after eating (*anasana*), and old age (*jara*). Buddhas usually appear in India (Buddha Gaya), where they can go forth and live on alms, provide first sermon at *Saranath*, and will be in *Ketumata* (present-day Varanasi) as its capital city. In addition,

[108] U Chit Tin, *op cit*

there will be 84,000 cities with 90,000 chores of princes. India will extend for 100,000 leagues. It will be without thorns, clear with green grass. There will be grass which is four inches, high and soft as cotton. The climate will always be good. The rains will be even, and the winds will be neither too hot nor too cold. The rivers and ponds will not lack water. There will be white sand that is not rough, the size of peas and beans. The country will be like an adorned garden. The villages will be close together, full of people, without interval.

The people will be tranquil, safe, and free from danger. They will be happy and joyful, enjoying festivals. They will have plenty to eat and drink. India will be delightful, like *Alakamanda*, the capital city of the *Kurus*. The capital city of lndia, *Ketumata*, will be twelve leagues long and seven leagues wide. The city will have beautiful lotus ponds, full of water that is fragrant, clear, clean, cool, and sweet. The ponds will be accessible to people at all times. There will be seven rows of palm trees and walls of seven colours, made of jewels, will surround the city.

In squares at the gates of the city, there will be shining wishing trees: one blue, one yellow, one red, and one white. Divine adornments and ornaments as well as all sorts of wealth and possessions will be hanging on the trees.

When he appeared on the earth again the *Bodhisatta* (*Metteyya*) will be the son of the Wheel-turning Monarch's head priest, *Subrahma* (universal emperor), and his wife will be *Brahmavata*. He will be named *Ajita*, and he will bear the classical thirty-two anatomical marks and eighty minor marks of the Buddhas and Wheel-turning Monarchs. He will lead the household life for eight thousand years. He will have four palaces named: *Sirivanaha*, *Vatthamana*, *Siddhattha*, and *Candaka*. He will have 100,000 dancing girls. His wife will be *Candamukha* and his son will be named *Brahmavatthana*.

At the age of eight thousand years, the *Bodhisatta* will mount a chariot that resembles a glorious celestial pavilion and when going to the royal park, he will see the four signs just like *Siddhattha Gotama* had acquired the *Samvega* (realization). The signs will produce the knowledge of a sense of urgency and he will develop a desire for going forth. The *Bodhisatta Metteyya* will go forth in one of his palaces unlike the present Buddha. Accompanied by his followers, he will fly through the air to the palace and go to the *Naga* tree, which will be his *Bodhi* tree (abode of enlightenment). He will engage in striving for seven days, which is the minimum period for Buddhas to attain enlightenment.

Buddha *Gotama* said that just as he was accompanied by a *Samgha* of hundreds of *bhikkhus* when he wandered around, Buddha *Metteyya* will be accompanied by *bhikkhus* in thousands.

The Teachings of Buddha *Metteyya* will be widespread. Seeing people who are ready to be the Awakened, he will go 100,000 leagues in a moment to cause (salvage) them to be Awakened.

It is even said that Buddha *Metteyya* will diminish the heat of hells for beings suffering in the lower realms. The first chief disciple will be the Wheel-turning Monarch (universal emperor who has a spinning flying vehicle) - *Sakkha* who will take the name of *Bhikkhu Asoka*. The second chief disciple will be *Brahmadeva*. The Buddha's attendant will be named *Siha*. The chief women disciples among the *bhikkhunis* will be *Paduma* and *Sumana*. The chief lay attendants among the men will be *Sumano* and *Samgha*; among the women, *Yasavata* and *Samgha*.

Wherever he goes, Buddha *Metteyya* will be accompanied by a great company of *Devas* (angels and demi-gods) honouring him. The *Kamavacarika Devas* will make necklaces which will be adorned by the kings of the *Nagas* and *Supannas*. There will be eight garlands each of gold, silver, jewels, and coral. There will be many hundreds of banners hanging down. Awnings adorned with jewels will resemble the moon. They will be surrounded by nets of bells and jewelled garlands. They will scatter sweet-smelling flowers

and different sorts of (perfumed) powder, both divine and human. And there will be various types of cloth of many colours. Having faith in the Buddha, they will sport all around. And many marvels will take place through the power of Buddha *Metteyya*'s merit. Seeing those marvels, many people will decide they would rather die than abandon him as their refuge. Many of them will attain Awakening, and those who do not will do good deeds which lead to heavenly worlds.

Rays of six colours will radiate from his body and illumine the 10,000 world systems. People will not be able to distinguish night from day. The only way they will know when it is night is through the sound of bird cries and the closing of the blossoms and leaves of lotuses and water lilies. They will know it is day by the cries of birds going to seek food and the opening of the flowers and leaves of lotuses and water lilies.

The major and minor marks will always be visible as countless hundreds of thousands of rays which will shine in all directions for twenty-five leagues. Through the merit acquired when the blood flowed from his head when he offered it to Buddha *Sirimata*, his radiance as a Buddha (Buddha-*patha*) will shine from the summit of the world to the lowest of the hells, *Avici*, and the offering of his head and the drops of blood will mean that the radiance from the hair between his eyebrows will be unlimited.

It is mentioned in the *Dasa-bodhisattuppatti-katha* (DBK)[109] that the Lord Buddha told *Sariputta* that while the Exalted One *Metteyya* was fulfilling the perfections; a perfection was exceedingly conspicuous, exceeding that of all other Buddhas. He was once an emperor *Sakkha* who went to Buddha *Sarimata* when he heard the news that a Buddha had appeared in that world. He went on foot till he could not walk any longer; crawled on his knees and then, on his chest to reach him without taking a break.

[109] The Birth stories of the Ten *Bodhisatta* and the *Dasabodhisattuppattikatha* by Ven. H. *Saddhatissa*, op cit

When he saw the Buddha in glory he was so moved that he decapitated himself to offer his head to the Buddha *Sarimata* as he did not have anything to offer him, saying “I have no suitable offering to make; I too, among all bodily parts would pay homage to your doctrine with my head; I pay homage for the discourse on *Nibbana*; may this help the attainment of the All-knowing knowledge.” Having passed away in that manner, he was reborn in *Tusita* as *Sakkha*, a deity having great psychic power. (DBK, p54-61)

Origin of the Metteyya Cult

Venerable *Saddhatissa* in his translation of the *Dasa-bodhisattuppatti-katha* discussed the origins of the *Metteyya* Cult as follows:[110] It should be remembered that Zoroastrianism arose (about 588 BC) in Persia prior to Buddhism and the concept of a future Saviour (Saoshyant) leading the forces of good against evil almost certainly influenced the doctrines of Judaism and Christianity and, to a much lesser extent, Hinduism and Buddhism. Since Buddhism extended to the present border with Persia, it is indeed more than probable that the idea of a future “Bringer of Light” derived from a natural cross-traffic of religious teachings (Buddhism with Hinduism and Christianity).

Concerning the origin of the *Metteyya* cult, Etienne *LaMotte* has pointed out that the appearance, outside India, of a powerful messianic movement was needed to transform Maitreya and *Ajita*, two obscure disciples of *Sakyamuni* (*Gotama* Buddha), into a Buddha of the future, a Saviour taking the from of a Messiah, of *Saoshyant*. It may be suspected that *Amitaba*, the most notable of the Buddhas of the Great Vehicle (Mahayana), god of light, of splendour and of endless life, is nothing other than the Buddhist and Hindu counterpart of an Iranian solar god.

[110] The Birth stories of the Ten *Bodhisatta* and the *Dasabodhisattuppattikatha* by Ven. H. *Saddhatissa*, op cit

There are various analogies between the *Bodhisattva*s of the Mahayana and the Ameshaspenta of Mazdeism: in both cases, it is a question of beneficent spirits whose name alone is known, but whose history and whose endlessly reported representation remain vague.[111]

The *Metteyya* cult has gradually developed as a devotional practice among the adherents of Buddhism. It has come down to us reshaped by the mythical beliefs in divine beings, the principle of incarnation, *avatara* (rebirth in Theravada) in Hinduism, and the concept of future saviours (including Christianity). The wonderful stories gathered around this cult are of immense antiquity and they were told and retold by devout Buddhists through many centuries. Those stories have been recorded, commented on and revised again and again by pious Buddhist monks, zealous worshippers and even some chroniclers.[112]

The manner in which the cult took shape is further recounted by LaMotte in explanation of archaeological, historical and other evidences. He points out that the cult of Maitreya was particularly flourishing in Central Asia up to the time when Islam was established there.[113]

The evidence collected by various archaeological missions is manifold: statues and frescoes, historic texts, deeds of the foundation of temples and monasteries, deeds of gift, religious and literary texts such as the *Maitreyasamiti*, confessions of sins, Manichaen fragments and finally hymns to *Maitreya*, all this witness to the presence of the new god around whom the aspirations of the oriental world are crystallized. LaMotte concludes that from this cult was born a Buddhism which was almost exclusively a religion of pure devotion (bhakti), monotheism. It was not in tradition of the old orthodoxy (Theravada). The faithful no longer acquired merits with a

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[111] Lamotte, op. cit., p. 785 (cited from DBK p. 51)
[112] DBK op cit
[113] W. Baruch, Maitreya d'apres les sources de Serinde, RHR, CXXXII, 1946, p. 67-92 Ref.51

view to a good rebirth in the worlds of gods or men; the ascetic no longer practiced the eightfold path to attain an incomprehensible Nirvana. The doctrine of retribution for one's deeds was, if not forgotten, at least put in the shade. Henceforth, the sole means of salvation was divine grace, anticipatory and efficacious.[114]

These sources do not give any dates of *Bodhisatta Metteyya* in *Tusita*, but vaguely point out that the cult has developed after the Jesus' period, and that it has similar features to that of Christianity or other faiths that emphasize on salvation.

Furthermore, the likeliness of *Maitreya* to Jesus Christ is expressed by A.L. Basham in his book 'The Wonder That Was India' as follows:

The *Bodhisattva* was thought of as a spirit not only of compassion but also of suffering. In more than one source we read the vow or resolve of the *Bodhisattva*, which is sometimes expressed in almost Christian terms:

"I take upon myself... the deeds of all beings, even of those in the hells, in other worlds, in the realms of punishment... I take their suffering upon me,... I bear it, I do not draw back from it, I do not tremble at it ... I have no fear of it,... I do not lose heart... I must bear the burden of all beings, for I have vowed to save all things living, to bring them safe through the forest of birth, age, disease, death and rebirth. I think not of my own salvation, but strive to bestow on all beings the royalty of supreme wisdom. So I take upon myself all the sorrows of all beings. I resolve to bear every torment in every purgatory of the universe. For it is better that I alone suffer than the multitude of living beings. I give myself in exchange. I redeem the universe from the forest of purgatory, from the womb of flesh, from the realm of death. I agree to suffer as a ransom for all

[114] Lamotte, op. cit., p. 785 (cited from DBK p. 51)

beings, for the sake of all beings. Truly I will not abandon them. For, I have resolved to gain supreme wisdom, for the sake of all that lives, to save the world."

The idea of the Suffering Saviour might have existed in some form in the Middle East before Christianity, but features like this are not attested in Buddhism until after the beginning of the Christian era. The Suffering *Bodhisattva* so closely resembles the Christian conception of the God who gives his life as a ransom for many that we cannot dismiss the possibility that the doctrine was borrowed by Buddhism from Christianity.

Romila Thapar in her book[115] - *A History of India, Volume 1, p.131-134,* wrote: There were other aspects of Mahayana Buddhism, which appear to have had their origin outside India. Among these is the idea of the coming of the *Metteyya* Buddha to save the world, with which was connected the concept of 'the suffering saviour' - the *Bodhisattva* who redeems humanity through his own suffering: evidently the new beliefs current in Palestine were known to the Buddhists by this time. "Vishnu assumes various forms or incarnations and enters the world of men in order to save them from evil. The tenth and final incarnation has yet to come, and on this occasion, he will come in the form of Kalkin riding a white horse, which suggests a connection with the idea of the Messiah and the coming of the *Maitreya* Buddha in Mahayana Buddhism.

The Theravada scriptures (in *Pali*) are the main source for our knowledge of the historic *Sakyamuni*, while the early Mahayana writings are in Sanskrit. Since Sanskrit existed only from 2nd C. A.D., the concept of a divine saviour seen in Mahayana Buddhism is clearly from Christianity. Shin Buddhism, a predominant sect in Japan teaches justification by faith alone, which is similar to Christianity.[116]

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[115] Romila Thapar, A History of India, Volume 1, p.131-134 Ref.52
[116] http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Parthenon/2104/mahayana.html

If we look at the available information on this topic in the Theravada sources, the most reliable references to this would be the *Mahavamsa*, *Culavamsa* and the *Anagatavamsa*. The *Mahavamsa* is written in 6th century A.D., and the *Culavamsa* is written by various authors, which is a continuation of the *Mahavamsa* is even written at a later date. The *Anagatavamsa* is said to have been written by the author of the *Mohavicchedana, Ashin Kassapa* (1160-1230 A.D.)

Since there is no definite proof of evidence that the notion of *Bodhisatta Metteyya* was in *Tusita* at the time when Jesus was on the earth we could not either prove or disprove the Null hypothesis that we have made earlier. We would have no choice, but to keep this assertion that Jesus could be the *Bodhisatta Metteyya* open. If we were to decide either one of the hypothesis, we would incline to regard that the date made known to us is most likely to be after the appearance of Jesus since the Mahayana scripts were written in the post Jesus period.

Jesus as the Bodhisattva Maitreya

We have come across many websites that have regarded Jesus as the *Bodhisattva Maitreya*. Peter Liefhebber in the Share International Archives wrote in his 'Jesus of Nazareth and *Maitreya*, the Christ' as Jesus of Nazareth and the Christ is not one and the same person. His defined the title Christ as a name of a function in the Hierarchy of Masters of Wisdom, something like the title 'Buddha.'[117] However, his explanation of the group as the advanced beings who guide the evolution of humanity from behind the scenes somewhat sounded like the God idea, which is in contrast to the definition of the Buddha.

Furthermore, his assertion on the 'spiritual overshadowing' idea, which he stated that the consciousness of Jesus that has guided him the actions and his teachings was the *Maitreya*, who

[110] Romila Thapar, A History of India, Volume 1, p.131-134 op cit

embodied the energy he called ‘the Christ Principle’ sounded like the *Bodhisatta* principle.

He stated that Jesus of Nazareth and the Christ were not one and the same person, which in the ultimate sense (*Paramattha*), may be correct when we view that the five aggregates (*Khandas*) of Jesus and that of the Christ (*Bodhisattva Maitreya*) are not exactly the same, but his conclusion on Jesus as a man who, as a result of the process of evolution, became a Son of God, as does everyone eventually. Others had gone before him on that path and many have taken it since, seemed to us that he was trying to merge the *Brahmanic* ideology of the unity of *Attman* (soul) with the Brahma, with the Mahayana principle of everybody as a *Bodhisatta* .

Liefhebber surmise that the seemingly paradoxical claim that Jesus and the Christ are not the same person, in the literal sense of the word, is more reasonable than it would appear. He wrote, ‘those Christians who find it difficult to accept that their teacher is not the highest leader of all humanity (God?) may, however, take solace in a second paradox: Jesus and Maitreya the Christ were (and are) one, in the sense that they, each on his own level, work in perfect concord to further the Divine Plan.’

A notion of some of the philosophers of the era stated that all the religions of the world would one day be converged into one, and a world religion will emerge. It appears that this has already happened for we have come across a faith called ‘Bahai religion which worships all the future Messiahs, Saviour and *Bodhisatta* of the major faiths of the world today. They claim that these future teachers are all but one person. There are also many sects calling themselves The New Order Religion [13, 44, 45] who are trying to merge all the popular messiahs and like, of the five great religions, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Islam into a single messiah who will be coming in the future; the *Bodhisatta Metteyya*.

Resurrection of Jesus

The resurrection of Jesus is elaborated in the Bible. The first person to see Jesus resurrected was Mary Magdalene who saw him on the

hill and when she was about to touch him he forbade her. Then Jesus appeared to the disciples on the road to Emmaus.

Why did Jesus forbid Mary Magdalene to touch him?

Jesus said: 'Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.' There are many explanations by the Church to this episode. One of this is that no human hand was to be permitted to touch the Lord's resurrected and immortalized body until after He had presented Himself to the Father.

Some other explanation is that Mary might not have a pure heart and may have emotions, and that was why she wasn't allowed to touch him while he had permitted other women to hold Him by the feet as they bowed in reverence soon afterwards.(The Life and Teachings of Jesus and his Apostles; pp192-193).[118]

We think the resurrection is the rebirth of Jesus into a *Deva* who has a subtle physical body that cannot be touched. However, when a *Deva* has established himself fully he may have the ability to create a body which can be touched. We consider that the first reason given by the Church would be appropriate with the Buddhist philosophy although it is interpreted in a different way.

A recent documentary titled 'The Burial Cave of Jesus' aired on Britain's Channel 4, the Discovery Channel, Canada's Vision TV and Israel's Channel 8 has sparked a swirl of debate in Israel and around the world. It is produced by James Cameron, the Canadian director of the movie Titanic, and directed by Simcha Jacobovici of Israel. It is based on archaeological finding of a 2000 year old cave in Jerusalem's Talpiyot neighbourhood in 1980 where the remains of Jesus Christ and his family were allegedly discovered in 10 coffins, six of which bore inscriptions which translated into English – included the names 'Jesus son of Joseph, two coffins of 'Maria,' and 'Judah son of Jesus.'

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[118] *The Life and Teachings of Jesus & his Apostles*, op cit p192-193

The discovery was researched by world renowned archaeologists and experts in ancient scripts, and DNA has reportedly been extracted from remains found in two of the coffins. The second coffin named 'Maria' was that of Mary Magdalene.

The discovery is claimed by its producer as the biggest archaeological story of the century and to a layman's eye it seems pretty darn compelling. However, some dismissed the combination of names found in the cave as a coincidence as those names were the most common names found among Jews in the first centuries BCE and CE.

Many Christians found it difficult to swallow and felt a great blow to their faith in resurrection of Jesus as they defined it as the reunion of the spirit with the perfected physical body of flesh and bones. Any evidence of the remains of Jesus' physical body would be detrimental to their faith since they believed that the physical body has been literally resurrected.

However, this discovery has further strengthened our hypothesis on resurrection of Jesus in terms of Buddhist belief.

Jesus in India

Holger Kersten wrote in his books[119] about Jesus' travel to the East after he survived the crucifixion. His assertion was based upon historical books written by various authors including a Persian edition '*Rauzat-us-Safa'.* It was mentioned that Jesus has survived crucifixion based upon the evidence found on the 'Turin shroud',

[119] Holger Kersten, *Jesus in India*; *Jesus' Tomb* in Srinagaru; Holger Kersten 1986. GPO Box 961, D-7800 Freiburg, W. Germany Ref.54; Jesus' two journeys to India and his demise as Yuz Asaf in Kashmir in the *Ikmal-ud-Din* by Shaik Al-Sa'id-us-Sadiq. A.D. 962 ca. Translated into German by Max Muller in 1882. Ref.55; *The Synopsis of "Jesus Lived In India" by Holger Kersten was written by Dr Ramesh Manocha & Anna Potts. Ref.*56, and ***htpp://www.alislam.org/ books/jesus-in-india/ html***

which is said to have marks of blood flowing from the wounds. They argued that a corpse could not bleed and that Jesus was alive when the shroud was put onto his body. Later on Mary Magdalene and her accomplice removed the body after intoxicating the guards and treated Jesus' wounds. He was said to have recovered and set off to the East. This assertion may be highly controversial since the Turin Shroud has been carbon dated and did not tally with the date when Jesus was alive. Moreover, we have found that some of the statements of the Buddha's prophecy on *Metteyya* are expressed wrongly according to the Theravada sources. Nevertheless, it is interesting to read some of the historical and anthropological coincidences mentioned in the book about Jesus' encounter with some of the members of the Lost Tribes. The legend of the lost Tribes of Israel is one of the prophecies of the Bible and a traditional belief of the Jews.

Evidence from Islamic books which contain a mention of Jesus' journey

In *Rauzat-us-Safa,* a well-known book of history, on pages 130-135, occurs, in the Persian language, an account, which, briefly translated, is as follows: "Jesus was named the Messiah because he was a great traveler. He wore a woolen scarf on his head and a woolen cloak on his body. He had a stick in his hand; he used to wander from country to country and from city to city. At nightfall he would stay where he was. He ate jungle vegetables, drank jungle water, and went on his travels on foot. His companions, in one of his travels, once bought a horse for him; he rode the horse one day, but as he could not make any provision for the feeding of the horse, he returned it. Journeying from his country, he arrived at Nasibain, which was at a distance of several hundred miles from his home. With him were a few of his disciples who he sent into the city to preach. In the city, however, there were current wrong and unfounded rumors about Jesus (on whom be peace) and his mother. The governor of the city, therefore, arrested the disciples and then summoned Jesus. Jesus miraculously healed some persons and exhibited other miracles. The king of the territory of

Nasibain, therefore, with all his armies and his people, became a follower of his. The legend of the 'coming down of food' contained in the Holy Quran belongs to the days of his travels."

A Muslim savant, i.e., Ibn-al-Walid Al-Fahri Al-Tartooshi Al-Maliki, who was renowned for his learning, states about Jesus, on page 6 of his book *Siraj-ul-Maluk,* published by the Matba Khairiya of Egypt in 1306 A.H.: 'Where is Issa, the *Ruhullah,* and, the *Kalimatullah,* who was the leader of the righteous, and the chief of travellers?' meaning that he was dead, and that, even a great man like him had departed from this world. It should be noticed that this learned authority calls Jesus not merely 'traveller' but the 'chief of travellers'.

Evidence from Books on Buddhism

Let it be clear that Buddhist scriptures have made available to us evidence of various kinds, which, on the whole, is enough to prove that Jesus (on whom be peace) must have come to the Punjab and Kashmir, etc.

I set out this evidence herein, so that all impartial people may first study it, and then by arranging it as a connected account in their minds, and may these accounts come to the aforesaid conclusion.

Here is the evidence. Firstly, the titles given to the Buddha are similar to the titles given to Jesus. Likewise, the events of the life of Buddha resemble those of the life of Jesus. The reference here, however, is to the Buddhism of places within the boundaries of Tibet, like Leh, Lhasa, Gilgit and Hams, etc., which are the places about which it is proved that they were visited by Jesus.[120]

The Ten Lost Tribes of Israel

Anthropologists have discovered evidence on the Lost Tribes. Some of the tablets found were dated around 707 BC and reveal the fate of the Israelites as they escaped from the land of their

[120] *Buddhism* by T. W. Rhys Davids[3]; and *Buddhism* by Sir Monier Monier Williams Ref.57

captivity and “disappeared” into the hinterland of Europe. These tablets form the “Missing Links” that enable us to identify the modern-day descendants of the “Lost Tribes of Israel.” Ever since their defeat and banishment by the Assyrians in 722 BC, the Lost Tribes fate has inspired countless claims to Jewish ancestry by groups scattered on every continent.[50]

“In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and he carried them away to Assyria and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of Medes.” In the years 722-721 BC, the Ten Tribes who comprised the northern Kingdom of Israel disappeared. Conquered by the Assyrian King Shalmaneser V, they were exiled to upper Mesopotamia and Medes, today modern Syria and Iraq. The Ten Tribes of Israel have never been seen since. There were many reports from the anthropologists that they were found scattered all over the continent including Myanmar. In the mountainous region which lies on both sides of the border between India and Myanmar, lives the Menashe (Shinlung) tribe which numbers between 1-2 million people. They intermarried with the Chinese, but the entire tribe is conscious of their Israeli ancestry. They are also known as *"Lusi"*, which means the Ten Tribe (“Lu” means tribes, and “si” means ten), which could be the hilly tribe known as the Lushia in Myanmar.[121]

Jesus’ plight to find and preach the Lost Tribe

Holger wrote in his book as follows: The object of his (Jesus’) journey was that he should meet the Israelites whom the king, Shalmaneser, had taken captive to Media. It would be noticed that in the maps published by Christians, Media is shown towards the south of the Sea of Khizar (Azov), where, today, is Persia. This means that Media was at any rate a part of the land, which today constitutes Persia. The eastern frontier of Persia is adjacent to Afghanistan; there is the sea towards the south and the Turkish Empire towards the west. If the report in the *Rauzat-us-Safa* is

[121] Lost Tribes *http://www.moshiach.com/features/tribes/ burma. php*

correct it appears that, by travelling to Nasibain, Jesus intended to come to Afghanistan through Persia, and to invite to the Truth the lost Jews who had come to be known as Afghans. The word 'Afghan' appears to be of Hebrew origin; it is a derivative, which means 'brave'. It appears that at the height of their victories they adopted this name for themselves.[122]

In short, Jesus came to the Punjab after passing through Afghanistan, with the ultimate intention of going to Kashmir after seeing the Punjab and Hindustan. It would be noticed that Chitral and a strip of the Punjab separate Kashmir from Afghanistan. If one travels from Afghanistan to Kashmir, through the Punjab, one has to journey over a distance of 80 miles or about 135 kilometers.

Jesus, however, wisely adopted the route through Afghanistan, so that the lost tribes of Israel, known as Afghans, might profit from him. The eastern frontier of Kashmir touches Tibet. From Kashmir he could easily go to Tibet. Having come to the Punjab, he had no difficulty in wandering through the important places of Hindustan before going to Kashmir or Tibet.

It is, therefore, quite possible, as some old historical records of this country show, that Jesus may have seen Nepal, Benares (Varanasi), and other places. He then must have gone to Kashmir through Jammu or Rawalpindi. As he belonged to a cold country, it is certain that he stayed in these territories only through the winter, and, by the end of March or the beginning of April, must have started for Kashmir. As Kashmir resembles Sham [Syria and its surrounding country] he must have taken up permanent residence in this land. It is possible, moreover, that he may have stayed for some time in Afghanistan and it is not impossible that he may have married in that country. One of the tribes of Afghans is known as 'Issa Khel' -- it would not be surprising if they are descendants of Jesus. It to be regretted, however, that the history of the Afghans is in a confused state; it is, therefore, difficult to arrive at anything definite by studying their tribal accounts. There is no doubt,

[122] http://www.alislam.org/books/jesus-in-india/1

however, that the Afghans are Israelites, like the Kashmiris. Those who have taken a contrary view in their books have been misled to the extreme; they have not made a minute study of the matter. The Afghans admit that they are the descendants of Qais; and Qais belongs to Israel. It is, however, not necessary to prolong this discussion here.

I have already dealt with this question thoroughly in one of my books; here, I am giving an account of the journey of Jesus through Nasibain, Afghanistan, the Punjab and on to Kashmir and Tibet. It may be noticed here that the Hebrew words, *Masiha,* is the same as the *Pali*, *Metteyya*. It is a matter of common knowledge that when a word is transferred from one language to another it very often undergoes a change: an English word, too, when imported by another language, undergoes a change: for example, Max Muller, in the course of a list given on page 318 of Volume 11 of *Sacred Books of the East,* says: the *th* of the English alphabet becomes... in Persian or Arabic... like S.

Keeping these changes in view one can readily understand that the word *Messiah* became *Metteyya* in the *Pali* language, which means that the future *Metteyya* prophesied by the Buddha is in reality the Messiah no one else. This finds support in the fact that the Buddha had prophesied that the Faith he had founded would not endure in the world for more than five hundred years; that at the time of the decline of his principles and teachings, the *Metteyya* would come to this land and would re-establish them in the world.

Now we know that Jesus appeared five hundred years after the Buddha, and that just as the Buddha had fixed the limit of time for the decline of his Faith, Buddhism went into a state of decline at the appointed time. Then did Jesus, after his escape from the Cross, travel to this land; and the Buddhists recognized him and treated him with great reverence.

There is no doubt that the moral teaching and spiritual exercises taught by the Buddha were resuscitated by Jesus. Christians admit that the Sermon on the Mount of the Gospels and

the other moral teachings are the same as had been preached to the world by the Buddha five hundred years before. They also state that the Buddha did not only teach moral precepts; he also taught other great truths. In their view the title Light of Asia applied to the Buddha is highly appropriate. Now, in accordance with the prophecy of the Buddha, Jesus appeared five hundred years after; and as admitted by most Christian scholars, his teaching was the same as the teaching of the Buddha. (Here, the author seemed to have misunderstood the time period of the *Metteyya*'s prophecy as after 500 years after the Buddha when the Buddha *Gotama*'s dispensation has disappeared).

On the evidence from books of history, which show that the coming of Jesus to the Punjab and neighbouring territories was inevitable?

The question naturally arises, why Jesus after his escape from the Cross, came to this country what induced him to take such a long journey? It becomes necessary to answer this question in some detail. I have already said something about it; nevertheless, I think it would be helpful to set out the entire topic in this book.

Let it be noted, therefore, that it was extremely necessary, by reasons of his office as a divine messenger, for Jesus to have journeyed towards the Punjab and its neighbourhood, for the ten tribes of Israel, who in the Gospels have been called the Lost Sheep of Israel, had migrated to this country, a fact which is not denied by an historian. It was necessary, therefore, that Jesus (on whom be peace) should have journeyed to this country and, after finding the Lost Sheep, he should have conveyed to them his divine message.

If, however, it is asked, how and why it should be supposed that the ten tribes of Israel came to this country, the reply is that there is clear evidence to that effect, about which even a person of

a poor intellect can have no doubt; for it is well known that people like the Afghans and the original inhabitants of Kashmir are of Israelite origin. For example, the people of the hilly tract of Alai which is two or three days' journey from the district of Hazara, have called themselves Bani Israel from time immemorial; so, also the inhabitants of the Kala Dakah, another hilly tract in this region, take pride in being of Israelite origin. Then there is a tribe in the Hazara district itself, which attributes their origin to Israel. Similarly, the people of the hilly region between Chalas and Kabul call themselves Israelites.

About the people of Kashmir, the view expressed by Dr. Bernier on the authority of some English scholars, in the second part of his book *Travels in the Moghul Empire*, is well founded: the view, namely, that the Kashmiri people are the descendants of Israel; their dress, their features and some of their customs conclusively point to the fact that they are of Israelite origin. An Englishman, George Forster by name, states in his book[123] that during his stay in Kashmir he thought himself to be amidst a tribe of the Jews.

In the book by HW Bellews, [124] it is mentioned that the Afghans came from Syria. Nebuchadnezzar took them prisoner and settled them in Persia and Media, from whence at some later time they marched to the East and settled in the Ghaur hills, where they were known as Beni Israel. In proof of this there is the prophecy of the Prophet Idris (Enoch), saying that the ten tribes of Israel who were taken prisoner escaped from bondage and took refuge in the territory called Arsartat which appears to be the name of the part known as Hazara today, part of the region being called Ghaur. In *Tabaqat-i-Nasri,* in which there is an account of the conquest of Afghanistan by Genghiz Khan, it is stated that in the time of the Shabnisi dynasty there lived a tribe called Bani-Israel, some of whom were good traders

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[123] The Buddha Maitreya. *http://www.tsl.org/Masters/ buddhas/maitreya.htm* op cit
[124] The Races of Afghanistan, H. W. Bellews C.S.I., Thacker Spink & Co., Calcutta Ref.58

In *The Cyclopaedia of India, Eastern and Southern Asia*[125] by E. Balfour, Vol. 111, it is stated that the Jewish people are spread over the central, southern, and eastern regions of Asia. In early times these people were settled in large numbers in China; they had a temple at Yih Chu, the headquarters of the district of Shu. Dr. Wolf[126] who wandered for a long time in search of the Ten Lost Tribes of Bani Israel is of the opinion that if Afghans are the progeny of Jacob they come from the

Tribes of Yahuda and Bin Yamin. Another report points out that the Jews were exiled to Tartary; they were found in large numbers in the territories round about Bukhara, Merv and Khiva.

Prester John, Emperor of Constantinople, writing about his dominions, says that beyond this river (Amu) there are the ten tribes of Israel who, though they claim to be under their own king, are in reality his subjects and vassals. Dr. Moore's researches show that the Tartar tribes named Chosan are of Jewish origin and that among them are to be found traces of the ancient Jewish faith; for example, they observe the custom of circumcision. The Afghans have a tradition that they are the ten lost tribes of Israel. After the sack of Jerusalem the king, Nebuchadnezzar, took them prisoner and settled them in the Ghaur country, near Bamiyar. Before the coming of Khalid Bin Walid they had consistently maintained the Jewish faith.

In the *Encyclopaedia of Geography*[127] by James Bryce, F.G.S. (London, 1856), on page 11, it is stated that the Afghans trace their genealogy to Saul, the Israelite King, and call themselves the descendants of Israel. Alexander Burns says that the Afghans state that they are of Jewish origin; that the king, Babul, captured them and settled them in the territory of Ghaur which is to the northwest of Kabul; that up to 622 A.D. they continued in their own Jewish faith, but that Khalid bin Abdulla (mistaken for Walid) married the

[125] http://www.alislam.org/books/jesus-in-india/20
[126] http://www.alislam.org/books/jesus-in-india/21
[127] http://www.alislam.org/books/jesus-in-india/25

daughter of a chief of this tribe and made them accept Islam in that year.

In the book *History of Afghanistan*[128] by Col. G. R. Malleson, published in London (1878), on page 39, it is stated that Abdullah Khan of Herat, the French traveller Friar John, and Sir William Jones (who was a great orientalist) agree that the Afghan people are descended from the Beni-Israel; they are the descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes. The book *History of the Afghans*, by L. P. Ferrier, translated by Capt. W. M. Jasse, and published in London (1858)[129] records at page 1 that the majority of oriental historians are of the opinion that the Afghan people are descendants of the Ten Tribes of Israel and that the Afghans' own opinion is the same.

The Fifth Gospel [130]

Haji Prof. Fida M. Hassnain, a doctor of Indology who is the first author of the Fifth Gospel is a resident of Srinagar, Kashmir and was the Director of the State Archives, Archaeology Research and Museums from 1954 to 1983. He wrote the Fifth Gospel, based upon the evidence from the Tibetan, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and Urdu Sources about the life of Jesus Christ after the crucifixion in association with Rabbi Dahan Levi, a Bible and Talmud scholar, the holder of Order National du Merite and the founder president of Alliance d' Abraham in Paris, an organisation which aims at the survival of historical links between the three monotheist faiths, Judaism, Buddhism and Islam.

They wrote in the chapter on Jesus Christ in the East about the Fourth Buddhist Council that was held in Kashmir in about 78A.D. during the reign of Kanishka, the great Kushana king and a patron of Buddhism. It was attended by 500 Arahats, 500 Bodhasattas and 500 Pandits, and it was said to be led by Parshva, a Sanskrit

[128] http://www.alislam.org/books/jesus-in-india/26
[129] http://www.alislam.org/books/jesus-in-india/27
[130] The Fifth Gospel. F. Hassnain & D. Levi revised edition 2006. (ref. 83)

version of the name Yeshua or Joshua, the original name of Jesus as alleged by Sue Olsson. [131]

The Council paved the way for the acceptance of Mahayana, the progressive school of thought in Buddhism. [132] Hassnain & Levi postulated that the three wise Kings of the East who came to visit Jesus when he was born were in fact, Magis who were looking for a Bodhisatta, just like those Tibetan Lamas in the present days trying to locate the deceased Dali Lama when reborn. They reported further similarities between Jesus and the Buddha by the words 'I am the Light and the Way' which were used by both Jesus and the Buddha. They also came across iconographic evidence of Jesus being regarded as a Bodhisatta by the presence of standing and sitting statues of Bodhisatta on a lotus throne of the Mahayana period with round marks on their palms and feet, symbolically depicting the wounds of crucifixion. They concluded that it is immortal evidence for the identity of Jesus as the teacher of Mahayana monks.

Hassnain and Levi also tried to prove that Jesus survived the crucifixion based upon historical and archaeological evidence and died in Srinagar, Kashmir, India of natural course, which is a big blow to Christianity's faith regarding Jesus dying on the Cross for the atonement of our sins.

[131] Jesus in Kashmir. S. Olsson. 2007 (ref.84)
[132] Yakshas-The Guardian Tribes of the Fourth Buddhist Council (cited from ref. 83)



From Roza Bal, The Tomb of Jesus (F Hassnain & S. Olsson)

They wrote about a legend of Natha Namavali that thrived among yogis in Kashmir, India as follows.
Jesus belonged to the sect of the Essenes, of which John the Baptist was also a member. John baptized Christ in a river, and the ceremony

employed was very similar to that which is performed to this day among the yogis when they take their ablutions in the sacred rivers of India. In the 'Song of the Yogi,' which the Natha Yogis sing, there are also references to Isha and to John the Baptist…….

The Natha Yogis of the Vindhyachal Mountains name their scripture as the Natha Namavali. Among the lives of the great gurus of this cult, described in this Sutra, is a guru named Ishai Natha. He came to India at the age of fourteen, and after sixteen long years of Tapsiya he came to understand the science of Samadhi. After this he went back to his own country and began his ministry. Soon, however, the Jews, who were his enemies, conspired against him and had him crucified.

At the time of crucifixion Ishai Natha entered into Samadhi; seeing him thus, the Jews presumed he was dead and buried him in a tomb. At that very moment, however, one of his Gurus, the great Chetan Natha happened to be engaged in profound meditation in the Himalayas. He saw in a vision the tortures Ishai Natha was undergoing. He therefore made his body lighter than air and flew over the land of Israel. The day of his arrival was marked with thunder and lightening, for the gods were angry and the whole world trembled. The Chetan Natha took the body of Ishai Natha from the tomb and woke him from Samadhi, and led him off to the sacred land of the Aryans.

The above information given in the Natha Namavali establishes survival of Jesus on the cross and his departure towards the East. It is interesting that we are further informed in this Sutra that Ishai Natha established his Ashram in the lower regions of the Himalayas.

Hassnain and Levi, in their Fifth Gospel described in details how Jesus survived the crucifixion, resuscitated and escaped towards East to preach and live among the Lost Tribes of Jews in Kashmir, India where he died at the age of 120 years and was buried in a tomb called Rozabal in the capital of Kashmir, Srinaga in India.

This concept may appear to contradict the hypothesis that we are trying to prove, but when looking into the Theravada Buddhist texts and consulting with learned scholars of the Canon we came across that Buddhas and Bodhisattas or future Buddhas, especially in their last existence could not be killed by assassins as they are destined to reach their goals by any means.

In the Vinaya Tipitaka Canon it is described that Devadatta made many attempts to kill Gotama Buddha, but in vain. Once, he intoxicated a bull elephant 'Nalagiri' with alcohol and let it loose on the path of the Buddha attempting to stampede Him, but the Buddha easily tamed the raging bull in front of his disciples who were panicking. The Buddha calmly told them that Buddhas would not succumb to any assassinations.

However, Jesus, as we have hypothesised him to be a Bodhisatta, may not be immune to assassinations as it was not his last existence, although it is not totally impossible. Nevertheless, it does not nullify our hypothesis by any means since we are trying to prove that Jesus was fulfilling the final requirement or *Khanti Parami* to become a Buddha, a saviour and a teacher of mankind, but not taking the sins of mankind by his death on the cross. If one is interested in this context please browse the TombofJesus.com website for further information.

Discussions on this Paper

We have sent the draft article to a few reviewers who are either Buddhists or Christians, including those who hold fundamental views, or those who do not practice any religion. We have received many comments and the major concerns are as follows:

Why didn't Jesus preach *Anatta* principle if he was a *Bodhisatta?*

One critic pointed out that Jesus preached the philosophy of God and did not emphasize on the *Anatta* principle (devoid of any permanence including life itself in any form of existence such as God); and that the similarities between the two teachings are vague and generalized to conclude that Jesus had definitely taught Buddhist teachings when the *Anatta* principle was absent.

There are several reasons for this fact. Firstly, we must remember that Jesus could be just a *Bodhisatta,* and not yet a Buddha. Only Buddha knows the four Noble Truths by himself, without any outside help! All the Buddhists who accept Buddha's teachings may not believe in the *Anatta* principle in their heart despite coming across this teaching; otherwise they will be freed of their doubts and will become a *Sottapanna* if they have practiced *Vipassana*. When someone has this enlightenment he or she becomes a stream-winner and would never become a *Puthujjana*, a lay- person again. Jesus must know this Truth by himself and not with the help of Buddha's teachings. So, he might still be holding the *Atta* view when he taught the Parables; nobody can verify this with certainty.

Secondly, we are not sure if Jesus taught the God-principle as we see in the Bible today, in view of the evidence that the Bible has been subjected to many changes, deletions and reviews in the past.

Judaism from which Christianity sprang was an unusual monotheistic religion in the Roman Empire where all other religions in the Empire were polytheistic. Jews insisted on worshiping only the one God of their ancestors, the God who, they maintained, had created this world, controlled this world, and alone provided what was needed for his special people, the Israel, and had promised to protect and defend them in exchange for their absolute devotion to him and him alone, a covenant which must not be broken. They believed that God had given direction to his people in the writings of Moses, referred to collectively as the Torah, which literally means

something like ‘law’ or ‘guidance.’ The Torah consists of five books, the Pentateuch (the five scrolls), the beginning of the Jewish Bible, and also of the Christian Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Jesus, who was himself a Jewish rabbi (teacher) was supposed to accept the authority of the Torah, and taught his interpretations of those books to his disciples. His followers were, from the beginning, Jews who placed a high premium on the books of their tradition. Jesus was trying to preach Jews who held a strong view on the God principle who would not accept any teachings that deviated from this principle. He was not yet a Buddha and he could not teach them to enlightenment straight away. He might have used an indirect approach when he was faced with strong opposition as some of his teachings contradicted the Torah, as we have come across. However, it is just a calculated guess and no hard evidence can be obtained.

Moreover, the similarities in the teachings are no doubt, in general as we might expect from a *Bodhisatta*; and not from a Buddha.

A future Buddha would never harbour a false view; did Jesus believe in Kamma-Vipakka view?

It is mentioned in the commentaries that a future Buddha after receiving the definite prediction (*niyata byadeik*) would never become a *Miccha Dhiti*, a bearer of false view (apostate) in any of his existences when Buddhist teaching is available. Thus, a question has been raised that Jesus could be branded as a *Miccha Dehitti* if he believed in a creator God and did not believe in cause and effect (*Kamma-Vipakka*) view as Buddha’s teaching was present during his period. Jesus was born and raised a Jew, no doubt. However, there is evidence to suggest that Jesus had been to India where Buddha’s teaching was available as discussed previously.

It is quite evident that Jesus held the cause and effect view by looking at his Sermon on the Mount. Moreover, the Gnostic gospels

that have been destroyed during the cleansing of Orthodox Christianity indicated that Jesus believed in the cause and effect. His belief in the Creator God would have either been misinterpreted or have been used as a camouflage to introduce his newly found doctrine to the Jews. The similarities between Jesus' teaching and that of the Buddha, as has been put forward in chapter one would clarify this question.

Why didn't Jesus mention anything about Buddha or that he was a future Buddha?

This question was asked to the author by one of the Christian missionary when we were discussing about Jesus being a possible future Buddha. It is a good question since we haven't come across a single word of Buddha mentioned in the Bible and in any of the Gospels including those of the Gnostics.

There are a few possibilities for this question; firstly, Jesus was preaching to Jews who had a strong belief in the Creator God and the word Buddha might have put them off since Buddhism was already in existence in the Middle East at that time.

Secondly, it has been mentioned in the Notovitch's book[133] indirectly. "Then he left Nepal and the Himalayan mountains, descended into the valley of Rajputana, and went towards the west, preaching to diverse peoples the supreme perfection of man (6:5), which is-to do good to one's neighbour, being the sure means of merging oneself rapidly in the Eternal Spirit. (6:6);"

Those who wrote the Bible were foundering a new religion and anything that concerned with Buddha would be a suicide as Buddhism was already in existence. Moreover, it is the Buddhist ethic that one should not reveal one's accomplishment in public to avoid conceit, which might have prevented Jesus as claiming himself to be the next Buddha.

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[133] Nicholas Notovtich, *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ.* 1894, Dragon Key Press 2005; ISBN 0-9761704-4-2 op cit

Why didn't Ajita live in Tusita for the whole lifespan of a deva?

Another critic has pointed out that the lifespan of a *deva* is very much longer than the period between *Ajita*, the *Bodhisatta Metteyya* of the *Gotama* Buddha's period and the appearance of Jesus approximately 500 years later. It was mentioned in the texts that *Ajita* mastered the teaching of the Buddha and had preached it before he died and reborn in *Tusita*. Normally, the lifespan of a deva would last a few million earth-years and the argument appeared to be relevant. The lifespan of *Tusita devas* is described as 4000 *deva*-years, which is equivalent to 576,000,000 human-years (earth-years).[134]

However, if we review the fact that humans may live for a hundred years, whilst there are also who live only for a few days or a few years, this argument may not be valid or logical. The lifespan depends upon many factors such as the present and the past *Kamma*, and other causes (*hetu*). Moreover, it is mentioned in the *Majjhima Nikaya*: *Uparipattasa Atthakatha* that *Bodhisatta*s in their final existence as devas in *Tusita* heaven live the whole lifespan, but should a *Bodhisatta* need to fulfil further *parami*s (perfections) he does not live in *Tusita* to its full lifespan as the place is devoid of accomplishing such perfections.[135, 136]

If *Ajita* needs to fulfil perfection before the final existence as a *deva* he might not live the whole lifespan. There is a plausibility that he may have to fulfil the *khanti-parami*, and might reborn as Jesus for this cause. The coincidence of Jesus coming from the heaven to take rebirth in Mary's womb as spectacularly described may support this assertion.

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[134] Ashin Janakā-bhivamsa, *The Basic Singyo*. Published in Burmese by the Maha Gandhayon press; p 273. Ref.59

[135] *Majjhima Nikaya*: *Uparipannāsa Atthakathā*, Burmese publication; p 121, para 200 Ref.60

[136] *Uparipannāsa Atthakathā* : *Dakkhina-vibhamga sutta*, Burmese publication; p 219 Ref.61

If Jesus was an ordinary person who held the *micchaditthi* or false view he could not have come from the heaven and return to it without doing much wholesome deeds (*Kusala Kamma*) in his life. Jesus is believed to be in the heaven after crucifixion and this may prove that he was noble enough to be reborn as a *deva*; for it is very difficult to reborn as a human again, let alone to be reborn as a *deva* according to the scriptures.

Lacking hard evidence?

A learned Bhikkhu pointed out that we are lacking hard evidence as our quotations are based upon secondary or tertiary sources. Even the story of *Ajita* is not mentioned in the original canonical texts.

In *Digha Nikaya*: *Mahapadina Sutta,*[137] it is only mentioned that the Buddha asked *Gotami* to donate the robes that she had made to *Samgha*, and not a word is mentioned about *Ajita*. It is only in the later texts that the story of *Ajita* is elaborated. Moreover, he pointed out that Mahayana Buddhism emerged only after the first century AD and that the hypothesis of Jesus visited Tibet may not be appropriate. Instead, he emphasized that if Jesus acquired the knowledge of Buddhist teachings it should be during Alexandra's period in one of the Greek colonies in the South Asia.

He admitted that Jesus might be a *Bodhisatta,* but it is hard for him to accept the idea of Jesus as the *Bodhisatta Metteyya* as he considered that *Metteyya* could be already in *Tusita* heaven at the time of the Buddha, and that he would live the whole lifespan as it is his last existence as a *deva*.

We admit that the evidence that we have put forward is circumstantial and our hypothesis is an educated guess based upon what we have encountered during this research. However, we could not disprove our hypothesis either, as there is no evidence at all to shed a slightest doubt to our hypothesis.

[137] Dīgha Nikaya: Mahāpadāna Sutta; paragraph 14 Ref.62

There is no known source to indicate that *the Bodhisatta Metteyya* is already in *Tusita* heaven when Jesus appeared on earth. The only sources that mention this statement are all in the post Jesus period. Both the later texts of Theravada and Mahayana that we have quoted are taken as authentic and treated with due respect from the respective schools. The original canon only contains the essential information on the liberation from the *Samsara,* which has to be recited and memorized as there was no *Pali* script, and it does not elaborate on other accounts.

Does Jesus lie when he mentioned about salvation?

Salvation is described in the New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary in three definitions. Firstly, it is the saving of the soul, deliverance from sin and its consequences and admission to eternal life, brought about by Christ. Secondly, it is the act of saving something; the state of being saved; preservation or deliverance from destruction, ruin, loss or harm. Thirdly, it is a source, cause, or means of salvation, a person who or thing which saves. If we took the first meaning of salvation, Jesus would have lied if he really meant as is told in the orthodox Bible.

However, we can surmise that Bible does not necessarily convey the true words of Jesus and what he meant to say, and moreover, salvation in the other two senses, could be possible by Jesus should he become the next Buddha. With the other two meanings of salvation, it can be brought forward by the next Buddha during his lifetime, which could be as long as several thousands years, when someone who has faith in him listens to his discourses.

Such persons can become instantaneously enlightened just by listening to a discourse given by a life Buddha, and would not have to take all the trouble of striving and cleansing ourselves by the

seven stages of purifications or *Visuddhi* [138] as we, practising Buddhists are doing nowadays.

However, this sort of salvation can be obtained only by those who can listen and appreciate the Dhamma, his teaching. Those who are born as humans and Devas can have such a facility, and it is very difficult to have this chance when the next Buddha appears. Mostly, would be reborn in the state of deprivation and suffering when the next Buddha appears, if we continue enjoying ourselves to the sensual pleasures and do not strive when the Dhamma is still known to us. So, it is of utmost importance to know this Truth and strive when there is still time and the Teachings of the Buddha Gautama in this world exist.

We do not receive any argument from the other denomination and some remain silent after reading the paper. It is inevitable that there will be fundamentalists that may still deny the possibility of Jesus as Bodhisatta Metteyya. To convince those sceptics we do not have much proof, but an anecdote to compliment this research exists. It may be of interest to know that one of the authors has made an *Adhitana*, a request to reveal if Jesus was the Bodhisatta when coming across the convincing evidence after working on this compendium till the early hours. The next very morning, the author to his amazement, found that one of the five brass cups filled with water, offered to the five Buddhas of this Bhadda Kappa was strangely emptied. The remaining four cups were still filled with water up to the rim, but a cup was mysteriously empty with no trace of water being spilled over. There were more than twenty cups of water offered to the Buddha and to the Arahats etc., but only one of the cups intended for the five Buddhas of this eon was empty.

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[138] Purification by virtue-Silavisuddhi; of the mind-Cittavisuddhi; of the belief-Ditthivisuddhi; by overcoming doubt-Kankhavitaranavisuddhi; by knowledge & vision of the Path - *Maggamagganandassanavishuddhi*; by knowledge & vision of the Way(insight)-Patipadananadassanavishuddhi; by knowledge & vision (of Nibbana)-Nanadassanavishuddhi. The Seven Stages of Purification & Insight Knowledge by The Ven. Mahathera Matara Sri Nanarama ISBN 955-24-0059-7 Ref.63

This may just be a coincidence, but the author regards that it is a sign to answer his request; to unfold if Jesus really is the Bodhisatta Metteyya, the future Buddha. The one who has revealed has claimed the right to one of the cups intended for the five Buddhas. This incidence may an analogy to an episode during the time of the Buddha *Gotama* where the novice Ajita claimed one of the two pieces of cloths offered by *Gotami* to the Buddha.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we have strong evidence to consider that Jesus had access to the Buddhist philosophy somehow and had used it to teach in his Gospels, as has been discussed. There are more than one hundred resemblances in Jesus' sayings to that of the Buddha, which could not be a coincidence.

We have adequate reasons to believe that he is a *Bodhisatta,* since he fulfilled at least six out of the eight qualities for a *Bodhisatta.* His passion to save mankind is well documented and his wilful sacrifice of his life on the cross, dying in agony, yet without loosing patience has illustrated so conspicuously on the perfection of his *Khanti-parami* that a few sceptics could hardly deny.

We could not totally disprove the Null hypothesis that we have put forward, that Jesus was not the *Bodhisatta Metteyya*, as we did not come across a definite date. This is particularly difficult to verify as all the evidence is based upon scriptures quoted from verbal sources of the past.

As discussed above, we have circumstantial evidence on the assertion that he is the *Bodhisatta Metteyya*. It is certain that *Bodhisatta Metteyya* was not in *Tusita* during the Buddha *Gotama*'s period as there was no known literature in either Mahayana or Theravada sources. Evidence from these sources has all indicated

that the period of description of *Bodhisatta Metteyya* in Tusita in his last existence is in the post Jesus era. The only piece of evidence from Theravada texts that we have encountered is in the Mahavamsa and Anagatavamsa. This Great Chronicle of Lanka, Mahavamsa contains information dated from the period of the Buddha's days up till the turn of the 4th century.

Since there is only one story of Ajita during the life time of the Buddha, which does not tell that he was in Tusita in his last existence (see 2.3), we can safely regard that the information it provides on Metteyya in his last existence in Tusita could have obtained between 1 B.E and 4th century A.D. when the chronicle was compiled. In the chapter XXXii of Mahavamsa it is mentioned that the Bodhisatta Metteyya was already in Tusita when the king Raja Malaka expired. If we can track the date of Raja Malaka's reign, we may be able to estimate the date more accurately, but we could not pursue this further due to time constraint. This information also coincides with the emergence of Mahayana Buddhism in the first century AD, which has a strong connection with Jesus, Bodhisattva Maitreya, and Christianity.

Who is Jesus?

The historical Jesus has been a mystified person to many. His teachings in the parables evidently contradicted Moses' law of the Old Testament, and being a Jew himself, trying to preach his fellow Jewish community he had to be esoteric in his preaching, which could have been misinterpreted by his followers after his death, and had left him to be such a mystified person.

Orthodox Christians regard Jesus as the Son of God, born to a Jewish commoner, Mary, by a virgin birth; the Saviour who took the sins of man when he died on the cross, and resurrected to become the Christ.

To many researchers he appears to be a man[139] born naturally to Mary, who was believed to be of a royal descent; had a twin brother, Judas Thomas[140] (Judas Khrestus) lived in Jerusalem about 500 years after Gautama, the Buddha; preached some of the Buddhist doctrine,[142] and was crucified by Romans for fear of leading an uprising by Jews.

A few researchers believe that Jesus survived the crucifixion[143] somehow; escaped to India; got married to Mary Magdalene, who also was believed to be of a royal descent that bore Jesus' child, and Jesus died naturally in India in his old age.

Many conspiracies on the historical Jesus exist, depicting him to be a human. Tony Busby, in his controversial book, the Bible Fraud, portrays Jesus as a Jewish prince, born to Mary, the royal Roman descendent who became pregnant with a Roman soldier before she met Joseph; had an identical twin brother Judas Khrestus who was rebellious and was the one crucified by the governor, Pilate.

He wrote that the Rabbi Jesus, whom, the Christians described as the Christ was actually, his identical twin that escaped to India. He is acknowledged for his research in disclosing that the Bible of the orthodox Christians has been amended by evangelist Christians, but his description of the historical Jesus is highly controversial and is not universally accepted.

We hypothesize that Jesus might be of a royal descent, born to his biological parents, Mary and Joseph; went to India and Tibet to study Hinduism and Buddhism during the hidden years of his

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[139] Da Vinci Code. Dan Brown Ref.64; The Bible Fraud, Tony Bushby op cit; The Holy Grail
[140] The Secret Teachings of Jesus, the Four Gnostic Gospels; edited by M .Meyer; First Vintage Books edition June 1986. ISBN 0-394-74433-0 op cit
[141] The Bible Fraud; Tony Bushby, ISBN 0-9579007-1-6 PB; 0-9579007-0-8 HB op cit
[142] The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ. Nicholas Notovtich 1894; Dragon Key Press 2005; ISBN 0-9761704-4-2 (Ref. 2)
[143] Turin Shroud-Picknett & Prince, BCA, CN 8794 (Ref.67). The Fifth Gospel, F Hassnain & D Levi 1998. Roza Bal, The Tomb of Jesus, F Hassnain & S Olsson 2008

biography as described by Notovitch; came back to Palestine to preach his newly found wisdom; lived a holy life; voluntarily accepted the crucifixion to fulfil his last perfection, died in honour and dignity, and was reborn as a Deva.[144]

We believe that Jesus could be the Boddhisatta Metteya in question, from what we have encountered in this research.

The Future

We gather from the *Anagatavamsa*[145] that the *Gotama* dispensation will decline eventually when the five disappearances started to happen. We postulate that when the *Sasana* declines a new order that combines all faiths and accepts the re-coming of a saviour will influence most people. This may also disappear when a catastrophic destruction of the earth comes in one way or the other that will wipe out all the knowledge on Buddhism. The only information available could be a vague one similar to that of the Bahai faith etc., where a messiah would appear to salvage mankind. It would be a repetition of the condition before the appearance of *Siddhattha Gotama*, a preparation for the appearance of the next Buddha before the earth comes to an end.

The Doomsday

The end of the world has been described both in Christianity and Buddhism. Science has also postulated that the Doomsday may happen either when the suns exhaust or the universe contracts to cause a Big Bang. This may not be a far fetched hypothesis since we know that galaxies can collide with each other causing a Big Bang and total destruction of a universe or *Cakkavala*. Such a collision of two distant galaxies several billions light years away

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[144] A demi-god of sensual heavenly realm who can live for hundreds of thousand earth years.

[145] Anagatavamsa Desana-Udaya Meddegama, translation by John Clifford. Op cit Anagatavamsa Mula Kyan Sar-Burmese version. op cit (Ref. 38)

from us has recently been screened on BBC News. The video footage of a collision of two galaxies is recorded from a space telescope and showed the dramatic event of the collision and the massive cloud of dust or debris that has resulted. Anyone who has watched the footage will know that such a thing can happen to us one day.

We understand that the *Gotama* dispensation will decline eventually when the five disappearances started to happen and a new order of faith may influence most people's mind. This will also disappear when a catastrophic destruction of the earth comes in one way or the other that will wipe out all the knowledge on Buddhism. The only information available could be a vague one similar to that of the Bahai faith, where a messiah would appear to salvage mankind. It would be a repetition of the condition before the appearance of *Siddhattha Gotama*, a preparation for the appearance of the next Buddha before the earth comes to an end as described in the canonical texts.

In the *Anguttara Nikaya* VII.62 - the Sermon on the Seven Suns, the *Gotama* Buddha has mentioned that the earth will have more than one sun when the world comes to an end (refer to 2.2.5). It will dry up the earth and its life forms firstly, by changes in the climatic conditions due to appearance of a second sun and eventually all life forms will be desiccated and burnt out when the seven suns appear. This can happen when the galaxies become close to one another and the solar systems merge as the universe contracts. Scientists have measured the rate of expansion of the universe using a Doppler method, and asserted that it shall contract again once it has reached its limit of expansion, and eventually leading to a Big Bang.

However, this won't happen in another billions of years; and before this annihilation comes, all mankind would be salvaged by its own effort of morality (*Sila*) to be reborn in the God's (*MahaBrahma*) realm, with the help of Jesus' (Buddha *Metteyya*) teaching as is predicted in the Bible. Those who do not have the chance to meet the Buddha or to hear his Sermons (only those who

are already in Hell and those who could not perceive or understand the Dhamma) would have to continue the suffering in the Hells of the next universe; as mentioned in *the Judgment Day*.

Formation of a new Universe

When the universe has settled down and is in a position to accept life, some of those in the Brahma realm with the God will take rebirth as humans again; and beginning of a new universe and life as described in the Bible would once again occur. A faith in Creator God will remerge since those who have survived the catastrophe would imagine that the Brahma God created them as humans.

It is mentioned in the Buddhist literature that such Brahma Gods can live an enormous life span and have witnessed a few hundred such Big Bangs and formation of new universes that they consider themselves as eternal (see Baka Brahma story). Thus, the whole cycle, creation, God, humans, animals, angels, hells, life and death, will begin.

Conditional Truth

After all, every spiritual belief is true for itself, a conditional truth (*Pannatti* in *Pali*) as defined in Buddhism; the only difference is in the way it is interpreted. The Buddhists regard this infinite cycle (*Samsara*) as the source of suffering, and the aim is to escape from it, whilst all other faiths regard this as the beginning of the atonement period for the Creator and the created, and to aim for the realms of *devas* and Brahmas as they regard them as the eternal heaven.

Our Aims

This research may have no value in helping one to attain *Nibbana* immediately, but it may help a few to consider the logistics involved, and perhaps, may help one to invoke an interest in the Buddhist philosophy, which is the first step in the right direction towards the Right Path of enlightenment; a *Dhamma Dana* in a sense; a charity and our endeavour towards the propagation of the Truth.

It may perhaps, act as a stilt to support the heavy branches of a Bodhi tree, a humble helping hand to the ageing *Sasana*, and also to the ailing faith in Jesus amidst the turmoil of Darwinism and science in this era.

May this effort contribute towards our enlightenment and our rendezvous with the lineage in the year 5000 B.E, when the remnants of the relics of the Buddha *Gotama* reorganize for us to pay the last homage, and to welcome the advent of the era of Metteyya.

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PART TWO

A Novel Approach to

Buddhist Philosophy

Tin Htut

Chapter 1

What is Buddhism?

Why Do We Study Buddhism?

Buddhism comes from the words – "Buddha and -*ism*", meaning a doctrine of the Buddha. The Buddha, in *Pali* - a spoken language of ancient India, means a supreme teacher who teaches the *Dhamma*. Again, the *Dhamma* is literally translated as nature (or the laws of nature in *Pali*) - all natural phenomena that apply to everything and everybody.

Since childhood period, people always ask many questions for which they want to know the answers. For instance, they want to know why does the sun rises from the East, are there anything beyond the horizon, why do plants need sun, why and how babies are born and why old people die, etc. People try to understand, and study and explain these natural phenomena through two basic routes, either Science - a physical study, or Religion - a spiritual or mental study called metaphysics - a Greek word relating to the things after or beyond the Physics. Science and Religion often do not agree. People who study and believe science, sometimes, criticize some teaching of Religion, and in some cases, it ends up in a conflict. In USA, the issue of teaching the evolution in schools had been a court case, and was not settled for a long period. Basically, Science and Religion do not mix.

There are many Religions in the world, but the major Religions that have considerable number of followers are Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism. Most Religions teach people morality, rituals and to have faith in God or the creator for salvation. The only exception to this rule is Buddhism that teaches not only morality, but to rely on yourself for salvation. Among its enormous teachings, there are aspects on fundamentals of science, psychology and detailed methodology on how to work for your own salvation. The Buddha is a title given to a human teacher who possesses unlimited knowledge or omniscience,

and obtain this knowledge through a series of commitment, determination, and continuous concerted effort, which are ten in total in different life-periods. He also had fulfilled this merit, in a countless number of lives in a time-scale that cannot be explained in conventional terms.

The Buddha had explained the composition of things in its smallest fractions. He described the subatomic particles, including the impermanence of these particles. He knew every minute details of a thing, and every detail phenomenon of the universe. He taught only a handful of facts that would lead to self-salvation. His teachings can be matched that of the knowledge acquired through science. Even the twentieth-century scientist Albert Einstein admitted that he himself was not a religious man, but if he had been one, he would have been a Buddhist. The unique nature of Buddhism, its synergy with science and its practicability are the main reasons for studying the teaching of the Lord Buddha.

Is Buddhism a Religion?

The Oxford Dictionary[146] defines Religion in four ways.

- The belief in or worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially in a personal God or gods entitled to obedience and worship.
- A particular system of faith and worship.
- Life under monastic vows (the way of religion).
- A pursuit or thing that one is devoted to.

Buddhism could not be regarded as a Religion if one defines it with the first meaning, since there is no supreme God who controls the power. There may be gods who can live a very long life and have some power to create illusions, but they care not the one who creates humans. According to Buddhism, man and the universe are not created

[146] Concise Oxford Dictionary, 10th Edition

by God, but a result of natural phenomena collectively known as *Dhamma* in *Pali*.

It may be qualified to coin Buddhism as a Religion with the rest of the definitions. In Buddhism, there is a certain quantity of faith, worship, devotion and monastic life. One could consider three most important and precious things in life, called as the "Three Treasures" or "Triple Gem" - Buddha, *Dhamma* and *Samgha*. Buddha is the first jewel, as a person who taught the *Dhamma* (Dharma). There are many worlds, universes in a long expense of time, where Buddha does not appear. In those periods, nobody has gained the knowledge of the *Dhamma*, and nobody knows how to liberate from real suffering. Certain persons who have fulfilled merits in their past existences may perhaps have potential to liberate oneself from suffering, but they cannot teach others the *Dhamma* to help salvage others. Such a person is called a *Pacceka*-Buddha, and they appear in a world even where there is no knowledge of *Dhamma*. Those of us who live in the present world are very fortunate to have been born and having access to the teachings of Buddha - *Dhamma*. One must not forget this beneficiary and must never try to play down the role of the Buddha. The *Samgha* is the monastic order, who are followers of Buddha and who have to carry forward the light of the teachings of Buddha.

Although an unshakable faith exists in Buddhism, it is not a blind faith. From a Buddhist's sense, it is combined with wisdom. A person believes in and follows the teachings of Buddha - *Dhamma,* because of his/her wisdom to perceive some truth in it, while having faith in those teachings which are not yet unproved. With increasing practice, the confidence grows stronger and realizing more of the truth. Buddha allows followers to think freely, examine oneself and try it before accepting any of his teachings. He is the all-knowing, exceptionally perfect and has full loving kindness and compassion on everybody, despite differences in race, colour, background, and even to those who do not have faith in him. He will never punish anybody who tries to oppose him or tried to discredit him. The *Dhamma* is the law of the empire, the Buddha is the emperor and the *Samgha* is the courtier in the

Religion of Buddha, and the teaching of the Buddha is the Truth about everything.

A Quest for Truth

"Truth" as defined in the Oxford Dictionary is the quality or a state of being true. In Buddhist philosophy, truth is not a quality which is subjective and in one way or another being judgmental. Truth, *sacca* in *Pali*, is something that exists in reality and inspiring it, as it is, denotes the discovery of truth in Buddhist terms. Anger, frustration, worry, compassion or any other subjective of the mind can be termed as truth, as it is for wisdom and enlightenment, which are objective truth in the Buddhist philosophy. Truth can be elaborated into a real truth or ultimate reality that cannot be further reduced (*paramattha-sacca*). What is accepted and conventionally agreed upon as true is an imposed and conditional truth (*pannatti* or *samuti-sacca*). For many people, truth takes the meaning of conditional truth which may not always be a real truth that cannot be further reduced to be universally applicable.

In present study, the authors will restrict themselves to the search of real truth which must be applicable to everybody despite conditional differences in many ways such as race, culture, locality, background education and in faith. To come to this ultimate truth, one may need to divide, dissect, analyze and reduce conditional truths into very small components until the final finding is not further divisible. Only then, one will obtain a truth which will be applicable to everybody in every sense. It may be classified the quest into following main categories which comprises of a cascade of universal questions.

- What is life and is there life-after-death?
- What is suffering in real terms?
- Why do we suffer? What is the cause?
- Is there a way out and how?

Finding appropriate answers to these questions will be an endless quest, if one limits to down-to-earth physical evidence only. It could be considered using logic and meta-analysis on a piece of solid evidence

that one could grasp. It is more of an issue of mind which has unlimited potential to probe into the mysteries of the universe. To start with even to analyze the issue of life-after-death can be a mind boggling and tantalizing question.

Chapter 2:

The Theory

The Theory of Everything: A Metaphysical Approach

People can go about their daily-lives, understanding very little of the world and it's strange and fascinating things, let alone to know that there is life-after-death and to understand life beyond our solar system.

The observable universe, according to cosmology has a diameter of quadrillion miles (1 with 24 zeros after it). The galaxy is only one of several thousands of billion galaxies that can be seen using modern telescopes, each galaxy itself containing some hundred million stars.[3]

People live in a galaxy that is about one hundred thousand light years. Our sun is just an ordinary, average sized, yellow star, near the inner edge of one of the spiral arms. If there is a suitable place to promote life in each galaxy as people on earth, there would be some hundred thousand million chances for the existence of extraterrestrial life forms. UFO sightings have been documented all over the world and their existence is another factor for consideration. If there is life-after-death and any extraterrestrial life exists, one should also consider metaphysical approach to their answers apart from scientific reasoning, which could never explain completely.

In general, science and religion do not seem to be compatible. However, there is one doctrine of a great philosopher whose teachings can mingle with science. Together, they can explain reasonably all of the unexplained. These are the teachings of Buddha whose doctrine could barely be called a Religion since self- reliance is emphasised rather than faith alone.

Some 2500 years ago, the Buddha - a great philosopher and a teacher in ancient India had described the four universal laws of truth, which, as a whole, became the "Theory of everything". It virtually

explains all phenomena that are puzzling the world today such as ghosts, poltergeists, reincarnations, near-death experiences, supernatural powers, ESP and extraterrestrial beings. It can even explain the concept of an eternal God and his creation of the universe and explains why we are here and where we are going. These universal laws are applicable to all animate and inanimate objects whether they possess mass or without any visible biomass, terrestrial or extraterrestrial, including every being that exist in the universe. It even applies to those who may live outside this universe if there is such an existence.

A Buddha was a thinker of unexcelled philosophic power. He was one of the giant intellects of human history, exhibiting a keenness of analytical understanding that has rarely been equalled. Buddhism is the only one of the great religions of the world that is consciously and frankly based on systematic rational analysis of the problem of life, and of the way to its solution, wrote Edwin A. Burtt, a Professor of philosophy at Cornell University in his book on 'The teachings of the Compassionate Buddha'. Another quotation comes from an article on "Buddhism, the Religion of the age of science", by U Chan Htoon. He wrote that Buddhism views life and the cosmos as a process - complex of interrelated causes and dependent relationships.

Man has to develop insight/wisdom to find his way out of this maze of cause and effect, which is the principle reason of rebirths and deaths. Just as a scientist investigate the external world, so the Buddha investigated the internal world of mind. Everything that he taught was knowledge that is accessible to each and every one if one follows his method of self-purification.

The purpose of science has always been to examine the physical universe and discover the laws by which it operates. It is not primarily concerned with man's purpose of goal; but in discharging its first function it has automatically laid certain bare principles that throw light on man's own nature and his origin. From the time when Galileo discovered that the earth is not the centre of the solar system up to Darwin's first treatise on biological evolution, the western religious ideas have been subjected to a series of shocks.

Science is a study of nature and its laws. One studies nature by observing it and making hypotheses and verifying them by experiments. From the results of such experiments, the validity of theses and antitheses are judged and theories are deduced. One can disprove a theory by finding even a single observation that disagrees with the predictions of the theory, provided the observer is competent. According to Karl Popper, a philosopher of science, a good theory could make a number of predictions that could in principle be disproved or falsified by observation. No matter how many times the results of experiments agree with some theory, one can never be sure that the result will contradict the theory the next time.

Four Buddhas had already appeared in this world and one will appear in the future before the world dissipates. There are indefinite numbers of Buddhas in the past world-systems and more Buddhas will appear indefinitely in the future worlds. The universe has no beginning and has no end.

Buddha that appeared in this world has studied nature and has produced many excellent theories, including the impermanence of matter and how and why it is always changing. He has stated that matter could be extirpated totally if one endeavoured and only then permanence could be expected. He has shown the method to verify these theories and the results can be predicted with certainty. Scientists say that any physical theory is always provisional, in the sense that it is only a hypothesis which one can never prove it.

However, Buddha's theory can be proven at any time, if a competent person follows ardently the eight guidelines laid down by this greatest scientist of all time. This theory makes numerous predictions that could be observed by any competent person who puts enough effort and practises with diligence and perseverance. It shows the method to verify the theory and predicts definite results.

The Four Noble Truths as put forward by the Buddha

It consists of four parts that describes:

(1) *Nothing is eternal*: All beings in the universe have to decay and die at a certain period. It is suffering, unsatisfactory, sorrow, misery, sickness, and death which is termed as an universal truth, the truth of suffering - *Dukkha-sacca.*

(2) *There is life-after-death and the cause for rebirth*: Every living being is reborn in one of the 31 realms of existence. It is the "thirst" (*tanhā*) which produces rebirth. The desire for self-existence, or for sense-pleasure such as attachments, cravings, greed and other defilements would lead the one to be reborn. It is the second truth of the cause or origin of suffering, known as *Samudaya-sacca*.

(3) *There is a freedom from all suffering and dissatisfaction*: Where there is matter, there will be life, and where there is life, there will be death. There must be something that is devoid of all forms of matter, something that defiles all the physical laws to be free from impermanence. In order to be free of matter, it must be annihilated somehow and self or personality view must be extirpated by wisdom to obtain eternal tranquillity. It can be achieved by those who have developed the highest state of enlightenment during this very life, and when they die they have eliminated the physical body and will not be reborn in the cycle of rebirths and deaths, the *Samsara*. It is called the third truth - the cessation of suffering - *Dukkhanirodha-ariyasacca*. There is emancipation, liberation and freedom from continuity of *Dukkha*, the existence of *Nibbana* - a complete freedom from suffering.

4) *There are ways leading to cessation of suffering - Dukkha:* One has to find a middle-path (*Mijjhimā pattipadā*), way of avoiding two extremes: one extreme being the search for happiness through the pleasures of senses, and the other being the search for happiness through self-mortification in different forms of asceticism. Buddha discovered through

personal experience the Middle Path which provides vision and knowledge, that leads to calm, insight and enlightenment, *Nibbana*. The Middle Path consists of *eight guidelines or ways* to understand the root causes of sufferings and to have cessation of these sufferings. Their results can be definitely predicted and achieved. It is the fourth truth regarding the method or the path that leads to perfection, the *Magga-sacca*.

These four universal truths are discovered and described by Buddha in an ancient *Pali* language. Buddha is a title given to a human philosopher who has discovered these laws without any outside help and has explained their implications for the benefit of others in a plain and simple vocabulary for the people of his era to understand. He explained in different ways and in different words to different people, according to the stage of development and capacity to understand and follow.

Nothing in this material world is eternal (*Dukkha-sacca)*

This is the law of instability and impermanence that applies to all forms of matter and mental states. Decay is inherent in all compound things. Work out your salvation from impermanence with diligence; were the last departing words of Buddha. In the *Pali* language, decay is known as *anicca,* which inevitably occurs to all forms of matter. According to physical laws, matter can neither be created nor destroyed, but it is subjected to changes in form and composition. Matter is constantly changing and is impermanent. Every animate and inanimate object including the universe has to obey this law.

Scientists have found evidence that the universe is not static and stable but expanding. Using the Doppler effect, it has been calculated to be expanding at the rate of 5 to 10% in every thousand million years. It is constantly moving and will expand up to a certain limit and then it may re-collapse. The galaxies will move towards each other as the universe contracts and the so called Big Bang will occur again and every thing will be destroyed, but it would not do so for at least another ten

thousand million years (1 followed by 10 zeros) since the universe has already expanded for that duration.[3]

There is no being or a place that is eternal. Every living being that possesses a physical body, which is made up of matter (that may or may not be perceptible with human senses) will have to decay. Where there is birth there is death and where there is a beginning there is always an end.

Life after death (Samudaya-sacca)

In the Buddhist philosophy, all living beings are made up of four basic-building blocks compounded into five types known as *khanda* or aggregates which people view themselves. An individual life, which in Buddhist sense is a reflection of the previous body and mind, can neither be created, nor can it be destroyed in the normal course of events. When people die, they are reborn instantly, without any intermediate state. They may take a rebirth as a *deva* (angel), a *peta* (spirit) etc., who has a body and a mind that may not be perceivable by human senses. If people are reborn as animal or as human again, they will have to develop from the embryonic stage. A rebirth can be in any of the 31 realms of existence (see details in Table 1) depending upon the volitional deeds we have performed. This cycle of rebirths is called *Samsara* in *Pali*. Every person has to take rebirths in this wheel for an indefinite period until the causal factors that generate it have been destroyed.

According to the Buddhist cosmology, human beings have been in this recycling process for at least four *asankhyeya* (1 followed by 40 zeros) and 10,000 worlds, since the Buddha - Lord *Gotama* himself had to fulfil the *parami* or virtues and perfections for this period, before his enlightenment and the final existence in this world at about 600 BC. It was after some period he got a prediction from a Buddha that he would one day become a Buddha himself. Therefore, it is impossible to determine exactly how long we have been in existence. There is no beginning and no end.

Life-after-death is determined by the state of one's mind at the verge of death and the condition of one's previous *kamma* or volitional deeds. It may be coined as the mental genes since they are arbitrarily stored in one's mentality and determined the quality of one's future life. It is a *Pali* word for one's volitional actions and the reactions both of the present and previous deeds. Just like the law of science, for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction, which may take effect immediately or may be delayed until it is appropriate.

We are reaping what we have sown. What we are now is the repercussion of what we have done in the past, in the present life and in the previous existence(s). We keep on doing these volitional actions, which are either classified as good or bad in relative to human conduct. These actions will be responded appropriately in accordance with maturity, which is the law of nature and there is no Divine being that is seeing to that response. All the major events in our life are the reactions of our previous and present deeds. All objective actions become new *kamma* and all subjective actions are the result of the past actions. All that is experienced is rooted in the present *kamma* and all beings are the owners of their past and present kamma.(4)

After death one can reborn in any of the 31 forms of existence. An ordinary person will be reborn in one of the 21 sensuality form realms called *Kamasugati Bhumi*. One may reach in a form of existence, known as the *Pancavokara-bhumi,* where the inhabitants bear the five aggregates such as matters (body), feelings or sensations, perceptions, mental formations (thoughts), and consciousness. These realms include the six *deva loka* or heavens, the abode of humans and animals, realms of demons and ghosts and the hell.

The 20 realms of *brahma* could only be reached when one has exterminated the five hindrances which include sensual desires, ill will, mental and physical sloth, distraction and worry, and uncertainty. In the *Catuvokara-bhumi* or the upper four realms of the *brahma* gods, the inhabitants bear only four aggregates of mind-feelings, perceptions, mental formations and consciousness, but do not possess any physical body. In the *Ekavokara-bhumi* or the highest *brahma* realm, the

inhabitants bear only a single aggregate of physical body, but without mental characters. (5)

Is there any life after death?

One does not normally believe in 'Life-after-death', unless one comes from a religious background, since the subject is somewhat out of scientific scope. Classical science analyzes the objective realities only, preserving the neutrality, which it adopted 300 years back, from its founding fathers Galileo, Socrates and Newton, etc. Subjective studies, like consciousness and mind, are regarded as non-scientific, and the powerful probes of science have been generally pointed away from the interior selves. Nowadays, parapsychologists and even some modern scientists think that it is time for a change for the boundaries to be redrawn.

Newton's idea of the universe, as a great machine, obeying precise rules of cause and effect, was shown to be inadequate almost two centuries later when Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity appeared. The true nature of matter is also no longer perceived as electrons, protons and neutrons, playing by the same rules as billiards, but as much smaller particles and fields of energy, which seem to behave in outrageous ways. Quantum physics has shown on the smallest scale that matter appears able to be in two places at the same time. Furthermore, matter that was once thought to be indestructible can now be annihilated by anti-matter particles in particle accelerators. The disarray of traditional physics makes us hard to ignore phenomena, which have not been explained scientifically, nor to regard such studies as pseudo-science. Science is still seeking an overall theory to make sense of all this, and Newton no longer has all the answers. The universe is a place of infinite mystery. Life-after-death could not be proven objectively with hard facts using the conventional scientific approach. Nonetheless, it could not be simply turned down nor ignored either. There is circumstantial evidence to consider its existence.

What happens at death?

People die in different ways; some appear to die instantly, like when being shot or met with an accident; some die a lingering death. No matter how one dies there is always a moment of thought before dying. The Buddhist Abhidhamma or psychology describes that consciousness or thought can be divided into thousands within a split of a second, giving enough time for anyone to think before dying.

The last thought at the verge of death conditions the next successive thought which occurs immediately without any interruption. If the thought is unwholesome, like thinking of loved ones, one's material things, etc. attachment to those objects occurs and the next thought emerges with those in mind (consciousness) and it is immediately followed by a rebirth into next existence.

Usually, thought by itself cannot exist on its own; [1] so it is associated with an appropriate body, which is made up of carbon- based material if one takes a rebirth as a human or an animal. If that was the case, one will have to undertake the process of development appropriately, either in a womb or in an egg.

If one is reborn in any of the other 29 existences in the Samsara [2] the process of acquiring a body is immediate and the body is not made up of carbon based material. Since the body is non-organic it can pass through walls and barriers and can also live underground as well as in water.

This process of rebirth is called *Opapatika,* and the rebirth process is instantaneous taking an appropriate form for that existence. It does not have to undergo a process of development as in animal kingdom, but takes a form immediately; as an adult or as a child as appropriate. This type of reproduction does not require sex, transfer of sperms, fertilisation etc. that we know of in the biological process.

In the *Kamasugati Bhumi* of the *Samsara* there are altogether eleven existences. Beings in these existences have a separate male or female

gender and they enjoy sex as a pleasure, but not necessarily for reproduction. Taking pleasure in sex is one of the causes for a rebirth in these existences. They do eat to survive, but do not have gourmets and feasts like we humans do and their food is highly nutritious. They do, however, enjoy other forms of pleasures associated with five senses.

Some gods as mentioned in religious books that have sex with human females belong to these existences. However, gods of 20 Brahma realms do not have sex although they take the form of a male gender. They do not have sex organ as they have already overcome the desire for sex when they were humans at one time. Rebirth in these Brahma realms also takes place instantaneously.

UFOs and Aliens

Some extrapolate that human race inherits genes from extraterrestrial sources. A paragraph in Genesis mentions about human females being inseminated by sons of God. [148]
It is possible to have inter-existence sex as there are many reports of such encounters in the Buddhist literature as well. There are even marriages between two different existences still going on at the present time in some parts of the world. However, it may not be only genetic sharing as some thought as aliens do not believed to have carbon based genetic material to share. They may have sex mainly for pleasure as sex is the main drive for most beings, especially those of the parallel existence here on earth. Those who have encountered with extra-terrestrial beings or aliens and have reported having sex may also belong to this category.

Accounts of flying machines have been described in the Buddhist literature since prehistoric time. They are believed to be vehicles for extra-terrestrial beings that exist in the Samsara. UFOs sightings have

[148] And the Lord said….When the sons of God, came in to daughters of men, and then they bore children to them, the same became mighty men, which were of old, men of renown. Genesis 6:4; Old Testament

been reported worldwide, but there has never been any hard evidence to prove their existence despite great improvement in technology to detect objects that cannot be seen by unaided eye, and it remains a controversial subject. One explanation is that extra-terrestrial beings are thought to have made up of totally different basic building blocks, and existing technology may never be able to demonstrate them with certainty to convince sceptics, just like ghosts it will remain as a shadowy figure.

It is rather hard to understand such existence exists, but if one knows the philosophy of the composition of all existences, which will be explained later on, one may be able to comprehend more on such existence.

Do extra-terrestrial beings use vehicles for inter-galaxy travel?

Accounts of those who have had near-death experience may indicate that one does not require any vehicle to do inter-galaxy travel to heavens. However, it is described in Buddhist literature that when one is reborn as a deva or a demi-god/angel in one of the six extra-terrestrial realms they are usually transported to those realms in a vehicle, which we may call a UFO or a space ship.

There are incidents reported in the literature that these vehicles are waiting for those who were reborn as a deva when they died, but humans cannot see those vehicles apart from the person who is going to be reborn as a deva. Such incidences may happen till present time but as they cannot be seen by third person they are often brushed off as hallucinations of dying persons.

It is mentioned in the literature that Sakka the King of the Devas has a flying chariot and has even a named driver called Matika. Sakka made several visits to ask the Buddha some questions that he was unclear of. There were accounts in the literature that the King of Devas used these vehicles when at war with Asuras (fallen angels) just as it was illustrated in the Star War.

Mode of birth

Apart from the animal kingdom, any living beings that are reborn in all other realms undergo instantaneous transition, which in *Pali* is called *opapatika*. They do not have to undergo a process similar to humans and animals. They may take the form that they had possessed before dying. Illness and disability of the past life may disappear when one is reborn in good destinations of heavenly realms.

This type of rebirth may be known as resurrection in some religions. On the other hand, those who have done unwholesome *kamma* and are destined to reborn in the realms of deprivation may either take a totally new form or acquire the disability of the previous physic. These are the demons or *asura*, the *peta* or ghosts, animals and *niraya*, the hell beings.

When one is reborn as a human or an animal, the gestation period is stressful and long and that is the reason why humans and animals usually do not remember their past life while beings of other existence can. According to the Buddhist philosophy, one is immediately reborn after dying.

There is no transitional or resting stage in between next life and death. One will be immediately reborn in any of the 31 realms, but the longevity may be as short as a few minutes, or as long as many world systems. The life span of each existence is predetermined, but one may not necessarily live the whole lifespan. The longevity depends on past and present *kamma* and on merits gained during the life.

Out of the body sensation

After dying the vital organs cease their functions but cellular death does not occur immediately. A person who is pronounced dead but resuscitated later may experience an out of the body sensation (OBS). There are accounts of such cases where some have seen strange heavenly places, met the deceased relatives or witnessed the on going current events in faraway places. These are the activities of the mind, which can travel much faster than the speed of light. What the person

had experienced could be the place where she or he might go if death had occurred at that moment.

This type of sensation has also been reproduced in vitro by the electrical stimulation of a certain area of the brain in a normal healthy subject. In these cases although OBS was reproduced, the person did not encounter any dramatic event as the sensation period was too short. Moreover, the person was not in a near-death condition and there was no foreseeable after life in those cases.

Evidence, which seemed to support directly the idea of life-after-death, came from people revived from apparent death by modern technology. Millions of people have had the near-death experiences (NDE), usually they claim to leave their bodies, float through a black tunnel and enter a world of brilliant light.

Dr. Melvin Morse of Seattle, USA has studied NDE in children and has a collection of wonderful colour drawings of the next world, made by youngsters close to death. Dr. Morse is critical of scientific explanations of some sceptics, that these out-of the body experiences are either hallucinations in a dying brain or a re-living of the birth experience. There seems to be a support for such NDE/OBS as actual subjective experiences. A women dying of a heart attack, found herself floating around outside the hospital, where she noticed a tennis shoe on a distant window ledge. Her OBE might have been written off as hallucination if a hospital social worker had not recovered the shoe from the ledge[!(2)]

A report in a scientific journal [(3)] on NDE of 16 cases from India described a different story. The authors have featured four case reports in their paper, all of which mentioned about “black-people” armed with clubs took the subjects by force to their superiors (*Yamaraja*) for judgment. They were released after finding out that they were taken by mistake, but one of the subjects had his leg cut off in order to prevent him from escaping. Before he was released, they put the leg back again and when the subject recovered from the incident, his family found marks on his knees. The authors had also inspected the marks, which were folds or deep fissures in the skin, but the X-ray did not show any

abnormality below the surface of the skin. There are cases of mistaken identity, who described about horrible experiences which were quite different from other NDE that involved seeing bright lights in pleasant environment and meeting gentle beings.

In some near death cases, no such out of body sensations were reported. It may be explained that these persons could be reborn as either humans or animals, which would have to undergo gestation and could not be reborn instantaneously. They merely did not have a chance to get a glimpse of their next life.

In some people, who have met a violent or unusual death in their past life, they could recollect or remember their past existence (*jātissara nāna*), since the circumstances were so remarkable.

Apparitions: Appearance of ghosts, spirits, poltergeists and demons are reported from time to time, and they are becoming quite popular in the Western society. In Daily Mail in UK, issued on Monday, July 1, 1996, documented and published the evidence of an apparition. An image of a ghost appeared in a group photograph taken in 1919 of the transport unit at HMS Daedalus, at Cranewell, Lincolnshire. The man without a cap, half concealed in the back row was Freddy Jackson, the Navy mechanic. He had actually been killed in an accident that happened 3 days before the picture was taken, at same place on the runway of HMS Daedalus. It was an official picture to commemorate the disbanding of the transport yard at the base. The negative was scrutinized for faking and was found to be untouched.

The following digital photograph shows orbs of varying sizes floating above those who were celebrating Battle of Bratain in Kent, UK in 2008. They were not visible, but came out only in the digital photo



A digital photograph taken at a party to celebrate the Battle of Britain in Kent; strange orbs appeared floating in the air, which were not observed with naked eye. They appear to have inclusions and the camera has been checked for stains on the lens to exclude artefact. The picture below was taken with the same camera on the same event.



***Is there any scientific sign of some quality or force within us that might be capable of surviving death of the body?*:**

People know that human body is composed of uncountable number of cells and tissues, initially made from carbon based molecules, which are in turn a collection of subatomic particles of the four basic building blocks (half & integer spin particles of quantum physics). They know the structures of brain and their functions, but cannot locate where our mind is.

Is mind and brain different?

To talk about mind and brain being different, one has to show mind can exist on its own, and is able to pass on information without the use of brain's five senses. This can be done by "Remote viewing", a type of experiment parapsychologists have been doing for years. This is done by the power of PSI, the modern name for telepathy or extra-sensory perception (ESP). If mind and brain is different, there is a possibility for the mind to survive after the body died. The prevailing orthodoxy is when brain dies mind perishes also. This is deeply believed and scientists have failed to understand that it is an assumption only, just like the notion of life after death. There is no reason why aspects of the mind should not survive death of the brain, but to shake this belief amongst conservative scientists of today, and to convince hard-headed sceptics, is extremely difficult.

In the last decade, there has been a lot of talk about connections between science and mysticism. A vast number of scientists may regard that it is nonsense or just pseudo-science, but evidence put forward is compelling, and classical science cannot provide satisfactory answers. One could remember that there are all sorts of things scientists claimed which are really acts of faith as much as any religious belief. When a scientist says that they understand how the brain works, or how human came into existence through natural selection, these are also enormous extrapolations.

One has to have an open mind and looked fairly at the evidence on life after death, which is impressive and comes from a variety of sources. Although science and religion are not generally compatible, the teachings of Buddha known as the *Dhamma* or the laws of nature can provide all the answers. The doctrine of Buddha could not exactly be called a Religion, although a degree of faith exists. It is largely based on physical laws of nature, just as science does, and on the introspective viewing and meta-analysis.

Lord Buddha himself had undergone the quest for truth and after striving with an extra-ordinary effort and perseverance to cleanse both mind and body, he came to know all the secrets of the universe. His teachings, which are universally applicable, are complied into three large volumes out of which *Abhidhamma* is the most sophisticated text. In terms of *Abhidhamma*, which literally means - the Buddhist study of mind (psychology), consciousness or rather sub-consciousness taking place at birth (*patisandhi-citta*) and at dying moments (*cuti*) are necessarily the same. Physical (body) and mental (mind) phenomena co-exist, both die momentarily, and are reborn momentarily.

Physical body is sustained partly by mind which ceases soon after a unit of mental process ceases, but both could arise again consecutively. A new body, which may not necessarily be the same, arises spontaneously as soon as a new unit of mental phenomenon emerges. For some reason, if someone lost consciousness due to a fatal cause, the mind operating at that moment is also the same as the process of dying. This may explain the phenomenon of Near-death experience (NDE), life-after-death and the recall of past life in cases of rebirth.

As far as human world and any other sensuous existence is concerned, many forms of matter can exist without a mind (corpse, microbes, lower and higher forms of plants, rivers, earth etc.), but mind does not exist without matter. Mind operates through six doors, which are the five senses plus thoughts. There is a physical base (object) at each door of perception. Mind and brain could be regarded as different things in terms of functions and potentials, but mind needs a physical

object to co-exist and both mind and body emerges as a single entity as soon as it takes a rebirth.

After dying from one existence, the last thought directly links with a subsequent rebirth of mind and body, which may or may not resemble the shape, form and composition of the past life. There are altogether 31 forms of existences in the universe, and a person can be reborn in any of these existences, depending upon the quality of life one has led. One has to be reborn and to die indefinitely in this cycle, until one has totally extinguished the factors of rebirth. Impermanence is one of the ultimate truths that the Buddha has discovered in His quest for truth.

Rebirth or reincarnation

One can reborn in any community, in any religion and may even change the gender of the previous life. Cases histories of a rebirth are witnessed throughout the world, in every race and religion. However, in some community although there are violent deaths the incidence of a rebirth is relatively low. This may be partly due to religious suppression on such cases that they are not publicised, and partly due to the fact that these people who had met violent deaths were not reborn immediately as humans. It requires a certain amount of wholesomeness in one's life to be reborn as humans.

Good evidence on life-after-death comes from the reports of Professor Ian Stevenson of the University of Virginia, USA.[4,5] In his research done for over thirty years, Professor Stevenson has scientifically recorded approximately 2000 cases of reincarnation from many different cultures. Many of the cases come from the East and mostly from those whose religion is either Hinduism or Buddhism, with no means limited to these beliefs. His cases also included Islamic groups in western Asia (the Alevis and the Druses), the Tlingit of Alaska, the Igbo of Nigeria, native Indians and Christians from the United States.

Professor Stevenson considered alternative explanations, like fraud and hallucination, before making a judgment. He had about 25 cases where reincarnation was the only possible explanation and had made

scientific history in May 1977, when he wrote the first article on reincarnation to appear in serious scientific publication, 'The journal of Nervous and Mental Disease'. He also published four volumes of a major scientific work- a study of birthmarks and birth defects in children who remember other lives. His new evidence is compelling: children who remember their past lives sometimes carry marks and deformities suffered in a previous life. In India, a boy with no fingers on his right hand remembered a life as a child whose fingers on the right hand were cut off in a fodder-chopping machine. Another child, born with almost no chin, recalled the life and death of a bandit who was hanged twice- it seems the first execution was bungled and the bandit's jaw was smashed in the process. In many of the cases Stevenson has documents and photographs confirming the injuries suffered in previous life.(2)

Co-existence of other forms of life

Accounts of ghosts, spirits, poltergeists and demons are reported from time to time and they have become quite popular in the Western society. These supernatural phenomena are being researched with increasing enthusiasm by many scientists. Although there are sceptics, more and more people are convinced on their existence despite the lack of satisfactory scientific explanations.

In Buddhism it is believed that all these beings coexist with mankind in this world. Ghosts and spirits belong to the realm of ***peta***, poltergeists and demons to ***asura***. These realms are said to be associated with mankind on this planet although their presence cannot be normally perceived. However, there is evidence that some animals are aware of their presence, especially dogs, since they can perceive the wavelengths that humans cannot, but we may not be able to proof the existence of such other forms of life in this world using traditional tools of science. Nevertheless, there are footages of ghosts, spirits, and spherical objects of moving light that have been recorded using special cameras and equipment by various researchers.

Basic building blocks

Scientists used to regard atoms as the smallest particles until they are known to be divisible into protons, neutrons and electrons. Matter on earth is made up of mainly protons and neutrons, which are in turn further divisible into smaller quarks. Nowadays, scientists say that the basic building blocks from which everything is made can be expressed as much smaller particles using the quantum mechanics.

Everything in the universe including light and gravity can be described in terms of particles using the wave/particle duality[3]. It can be divided into two groups: particles of half spin which make up the matter, protons and neutrons in the universe; and particles of integer spin 0, 1 and 2 which give rise to forces such as gravity, electromagnetic, weak and strong nuclear forces between the matter particles.

These force carrying particles of integer spin are said to be virtual particles because unlike real particles they cannot be directly detected by a particle detector. However, they do have a measurable effect called waves. These integer spin particles do exist in some circumstances also as real particles, when they can be detected directly. Otherwise, they are usually expressed as forces or energy.

The philosophy of the composition of all beings in existence, the five aggregates

According to Buddhist philosophy, a person or a being is composed of five aggregates (*pancakkhanda*) such as physical matter (body), feelings or sensations, perceptions, mental formations (thoughts), and consciousness.

Aggregate of matter or body *(rupakkhanda)*

According to science, the physical body of humans and animals is made up of morbid matter particles of half spin compounded into atoms, and carbon based molecules, and further into cells, tissues and organs.

In the Buddhist philosophy, this aggregate is also made up of carbon based compounds of fine material particles.

The body is made up of subatomic matter particles (*kalapa*), which in turn constitute the four basic elements (*mahabhuta*) known as *pathavi* or fine matter particles, *Apo, tejo* and *vayo* as forces and energy of different characters. There is no such thing as eternal soul or *atta* in our body that reincarnates into a new body when a person dies. Beings of other existence apart from mankind are also said to posses a body that does not compose of the same building blocks as ourselves.

Ghosts and other beings may probably be made up of particles of integer spin, since they can sometimes be detected as waves and sometimes they can be seen momentarily as apparitions. These beings do not and could not in normal circumstances contact or do physical harm to humans.

However, there are mundane practices involving black magic using these creatures to harm people, but they could not cast the spell on everyone unless when one's *kamma* is weakened. Every individual is said to have a guardian angel, someone who is attached to you somehow, who could be a relative of that person in one of the previous lives. These guardians usually protect us from such witchcraft.

Aggregate of feeling or sensation *(vedanakkhanda)*

In science, the feeling or sensation is produced when the five sense organs of our body come into contact with a stimulus, which are transmitted to central nervous system as nerve impulses.

Similarly, in Buddhism, the feeling or sensation can be detected through six senses. These impulses can be regarded as composed of either half spin or integer spin particles since they have no mass, but can be detected as waves, and can be detected in the brain using electronic machine.

Aggregate of perception or cognition *(sannakkhanda)*

It is an aggregate that results from perception and cognition of sensual stimulations of our six senses. Although this aggregate cannot be detected as waves, their presence can be demonstrated in a person by the ability to remember and express things. It is similar as in the case of gravity, where it can be demonstrated; yet no morbid particles are involved. Gravity is said to contain particles of integer spin and the aggregate of perception, which cannot be detected may also contain similar particles.

Aggregate of mental formation *(sankharakkhanda)*

It is an aggregate of mental formation or mental concomitant that associate with our thoughts and a process of chain reactions of our physical body *(khanda),* which is influenced by physical laws leading to inevitable consequences. This aggregate may also contain some sort of particles that are affected by the laws of nature.

Aggregate of consciousness *(vinnatakkhanda)*

It may be expressed as the resultant of the interactions of physical receptors with the mind leading to a consciousness, that we regard as our soul. This aggregate may or may not necessarily constitute particles of the basic building blocks depending upon past causes.

Buddhist philosophy on the composition of all existence does not have any any place for eternal soul, but it does not deny the existence of soul or atta/attman that changes with each existence. Consciousness could not exist on its own as it needs something physical to perceive sensations. If rebirth takes place as spirits that do not have physical body, it may appear somewhat like orbs that are seen in the digital photo on page 200. If we enlarge the digital photo we can see some structures coiled inside those orbs, which may be like a nucleus that contains DNA coils in a cell.

Past causes of rebirths

When a person dies, five past causes lead to a rebirth and its quality. They are:

- Ignorance or lack of right views*, avijja.*
- Mental and physical concomitants or formations and their inevitable consequences or reactions*, sankhara.*
- Defilements or cravings, *tanha.*
- Attachments or obsessions, *upadana.*
- Volitional actions*, kamma-bhava.*

These five causes will result in a rebirth of the five aggregates, according to the law of dependant arising (See Figure 1). When a person is reborn anywhere in the 31 planes of *Samsara*, particles of the basic building blocks will be involved. However, when an enlightened person (*arahat*) who has extirpated the five causes of rebirth dies, there will no longer be formation of any aggregate of these particles.

Buddhist cosmology

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia [149] and edited by the author

Buddhist cosmology is the description of the shape and evolution of the universe according to the canonical Buddhist scriptures and commentaries.

The self-consistent Buddhist cosmology which is presented in commentaries and works of Abhidharma in both Theravāda and

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149 ^ Susan Elbaum Jootla "Teacher of the Devas": The Wheel Publication No. 414/416 (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1997) article link at Access to Insight

Mahāyāna traditions, is the end-product of an analysis and reconciliation of cosmological comments found in the Buddhist sūtra and vinaya traditions. No single sūtra sets out the entire structure of the universe. However, in several sūtras the Buddha describes other worlds and states of being, and other sūtras describe the origin and destruction of the universe. The synthesis of these data into a single compendium must have taken place early in the history of Buddhism, as the system described in the Pāli Vibhajyavāda tradition (represented by today's Theravādins) agrees, despite some trivial inconsistencies of nomenclature, with the Sarvāstivāda tradition which is preserved by Mahāyāna Buddhists.

The picture of the world presented in Buddhist cosmological descriptions cannot be taken as a literal description of the shape of the universe. It is inconsistent, and cannot be made consistent, with astronomical data that were already known in ancient India. However, it is not intended to be a description of how ordinary humans perceive their world; rather, it is the universe as seen through the divyacakṣus (Pāli: dibbacakkhu), the "divine eye" by which a Buddha or an arhat who has cultivated this faculty can perceive all of the other worlds and the beings arising (being born) and passing away (dying) within them, and can tell from what state they have been reborn and into what state they will be reborn. The cosmology has also been interpreted in a symbolical or allegorical sense (see Ten spiritual realms).

Buddhist cosmology can be divided into two related kinds: spatial cosmology, which describes the arrangement of the various worlds within the universe, and temporal cosmology, which describes how those worlds come into existence, and how they pass away.

Spatial cosmology

Spatial cosmology can also be divided into two branches. The *vertical* (or cakravāḍa) cosmology describes the arrangement of worlds in a vertical pattern, some being higher and some lower in generic terms. By

contrast, the *horizontal* (sahasra) cosmology describes the grouping or species of these vertical worlds into sets of thousands, millions or billions.

Vertical or generic cosmology

In the vertical cosmology, the universe exists of many worlds (bhumi, place or lokā existence in Pali) – one might say "planes" – stacked one upon the next in layers. Each world corresponds to a mental state or a state of being. A world is, however, not a location as such as the beings which compose it may coexist with another world in the same location; for instance humans and animals coexist as well as the parallel world of invisible entities on earth. It is sustained by their kamma and if all beings in a world die or disappear, the world disappears too. Likewise, a world comes into existence when the first being is born into it. The physical separation is not so important as the difference in the mental state; humans and animals, though they partially share the same physical environments, still belong to different worlds because their minds perceive and react to those environments differently.

Thirty one planes of existences in Samsara

Buddhism, unlike any other religion, describes altogether 31 existences in the universe, including the Heaven, the Paradise and all the God(s) of other faiths. The vertical cosmology is divided into thirty-one planes of existence and the planes into three major orders, or loka, each corresponding to a different type of mentality.

These three (Ti loka) are: (1) the formless or un-manifested Gods, ***Ārūpaloka***; (2) manifested or Gods with forms, the ***Rūpaloka***, which are existences without any sensuality; and (3) ***Kāmaloka*** or sensual existences that perceive six senses (including thoughts).
This technical division does not correspond to the more informal categorization of the "five or six realms". In the latter scheme, all of the beings born in the Ārūpaloka and the Rūpaloka as well as a

considerable fraction of the beings born in the Kāmaloka, though these deities differ from those of the Ārūpaloka, and also from humans, may be classified as "gods" or "deities" (**deva**). It is to be understood that **deva** is a generalized term referring to any being living a longer life and generally more blissful than humans. Most of them are not "gods" as we know of, having little or no connection with the human world and rarely, if ever, interacting with them. Only the lowest deities of the Kāmaloka correspond to the gods described in many polytheistic religions.

The term "brahmā" is used both as a name and as a generic term for one of the higher devas. In its broadest sense, it can refer to any of the inhabitants of the Ārūpaloka and the Rūpaloka. In a more restricted sense, it can refer to inhabitants of one of the nine lower worlds of the Rūpaloka (manifested), more specifically to the three lowest worlds of the Rūpaloka.The word brahma is also used as a title to a name as in Brahmā Sahampati, Brahmā Sanatkumāra, Baka Brahmā, etc. It is not always clear which world they belong to, although it must always be one of the worlds of the Rūpaloka below the Śuddhāvāsa worlds.

Realms of unmanisfested (Ārūpaloka)

The **Arūpaloka** (Pāli) or **Ārūpyadhātu** (Sanskrit) (Tib: *gzugs.med.pa'i khams*) or "Formless realm" could not be placed in physical cosmology, as none of these beings has either shape or location; and correspondingly, their realm has no definite location either. This realm belongs to those devas who attained and remained in the Four Formless Absorptions (catu-samāpatti) of the arūpajhānas through deep meditation in a previous life, and they are enjoying the fruit (vipāka) of the good kamma of that accomplishment. These are the highest forms of existence in the Samsara, the wheel of rebirths, even more so than the God as described in various faiths, and they could not be contacted even by the Buddha as they have no perception at all. Their lifespan is nearly eternity, but they will pass away from this existence one day when their kamma (merit) exhaust.

Bodhisattas or would-be buddhas, however, are never born in the Ārūpabhumi even when they have attained the arūpajhāna absorptions since they need to fulfil more perfections in the human world and this existence is rather too long (eternity) to accomplish all perfections within the destined period. There are four types of Ārūpabhumi devas, corresponding to the four types of arūpajhānas:

1. Nevasaññānāsaññāyatana or **Naivasaṃjñānāsaṃjñāyatana** (Tib: *'du.shes.med 'du.shes.med.min*) "The sphere of neither perception nor non-perception". In this sphere the formless beings have gone beyond a mere negation of perception and have attained a luminal state where they do not engage in "perception" (saṃjñā, recognition of particulars by their marks), but are not totally unconscious. This was the sphere reached by Uddaka Rāmaputta (Udraka Rāmaputra), the second of the Buddha's two teachers, who had considered it as equivalent to Nibbana enlightenment.

2. Ākiñcaññāyatana or **Ākiṃcanyāyatana** (Tib: *ci.yang.med*) "The sphere of Nothingness" (literally "lacking everything"). In this sphere formless beings dwell, contemplating upon the thought that "there is nothing" and this is considered a form of perception, though a very subtle one. This was the sphere reached by Āḷāra Kālāma (Ārāḍa Kālāma), the first of the Buddha's two teachers who had also considered it to be equivalent to Nibbana.

3. Viññāṇānañcāyatana or **Vijñānānantyāyatana** (Tib: *rnam.shes mtha'.yas*) "The sphere of Infinite Consciousness". In this sphere formless beings dwell, meditating on their consciousness (vijñāna) as infinitely pervasive.

4. Ākāsānañcāyatana or **Ākāśānantyāyatana** (Tib: *nam.mkha' mtha'.yas*) "The sphere of Infinite Space". In this sphere formless beings dwell, meditating upon space or extension (ākāśa) as infinitely pervasive.

Realms of Gods with manifestations (Rūpaloka)

The Rūpaloka (Rūpadhātu); Tib: *gzugs.kyi khams*) or "manisfested-Form realm" is, as the name implies, the first of the physical realms. All its inhabitants have a location and a subtle body, which is invisible to the inhabitants of the Kāmaloka. According to the Janavasabha Sutta, when a brahma (a being from the Brahma-world of the Rūpaloka) wishes to visit a deva of the Tavatimsa heaven (in the Kāmaloka), he has to assume a "grosser form" in order to make himself visible.

The beings of the manisfested Form-realm are not subject to the extremes of pleasure and pain, nor governed by sensual desires, as those of the Kāmaloka. They do not have sex organ although they take the form of musculine gender.

Like the beings of the Ārūpaloka, they have minds corresponding to the four lower jhānas. They can be divided into four broad classes corresponding to the four jhānas, and each of them is further subdivided into genus; three for each of the four jhānas and five for the Śuddhāvāsa devas, with a total of seventeen genera (the Theravāda tradition counts one less genus in the highest jhāna).

Spatially, the Rūpabhumi consists of a series of planes stacked on top of each other, with distances half the length of the previous one as it descends. The size of these brahma also becomes larger as the plane descends. The higher planes are also much broader than the lower planes.

Abodes of enlightened ones (Śuddhāvāsa worlds)

The Śuddhāvāsa (Tib: *gnas gtsang.ma*) worlds, or "Pure Abodes", are distinct from the other worlds of the Rūpaloka in that it cannot be reached through ordinary merit or meditative attainments (jhana), but only Anāgāmins ("Non-returners") who are already on the path to Arahat-hood and will attain final enlightenment directly from the

Śuddhāvāsa worlds without being reborn in a lower plane.[150] Every Śuddhāvāsa deva is therefore regarded as a protector of Buddhism. Brahma Sahampati, who had appealed to the Gotama Buddha after his enlightenment to teach the Dhamma, was an Anagami from a previous Buddha. [As Śuddhāvāsa deva is a non-returner to human world Bodhisattas do not take rebirth in these realms as they must ultimately be reborn as a human being to become a buddha.

These realms are only filled in when Buddhas appear in the world. In periods devoid of Buddhas these abodes can remain empty. However, unlike the lower worlds, the Śuddhāvāsa worlds are not subject to natural catastrophe through collisions of galaxies. The Śuddhāvāsa devas predict the coming of a Buddha and, taking the guise of brahmins, reveal to human beings the signs by which a Buddha can be recognized. They also ensure that a Bodhisatta in his last life will encounter the four signs that will lead to his renunciation.

The five Śuddhāvāsa worlds are:

5. Akaniṭṭha or **Akaniṣṭha**– World of devas "equal in rank" (literally: having no one as a junior). It is the highest of all the Rūpaloka worlds, and is often referred to as the highest point of the universe. The current Śakka, the King of devas will eventually be reborn there after passing away from Tavatimsa. The duration of life in Akaniṣṭha is 16,000 kalpas (Vibhajyavāda tradition). The height of this world is described as 167,772,160 yojanas above the Earth.

6. Sudassī or **Sudarśana** – The "clear-seeing" devas live in a world similar to the Akaniṭṭha world. The height of this world is said to be 83,886,080 yojanas above the Earth.

[150] Anāgāmins can be reborn on lower planes if they chose to be

7. Sudassa or **Sudṛśa** – The world of the "beautiful" devas are said to be the place of rebirth for five kinds of anāgāmins. The height of this world is mentioned as 41,943,040 yojanas above the Earth.

8. Atappa or **Atapa** – The world of the "untroubled" devas, whose company those of lower realms yearn for. The height of this world is described 20,971,520 yojanas above the Earth.

9. Aviha or **Avṛha** – The world of the "not falling" devas, perhaps the most common destination for Anāgāmins. Many achieve arhatship directly from this world, but some pass away and are reborn in sequentially higher worlds of the Pure Abodes until they are at last reborn in the Akaniṭṭha world. These are called in Pāli uddhaṃsotas, "those whose stream goes upward". The duration of life in Aviha is 1,000 kalpas (Vibhajyavāda tradition). The height of this world is mentioned as10,485,760 yojanas above the Earth.

Bṛhatphala worlds

The mental state of these devas of the Bṛhatphala worlds corresponds to the fourth jhāna, which is characterized by equanimity (upekṣā). The Bṛhatphala worlds form the upper limit to the destruction of the universe by wind at the end of a mahākalpa (see Temporal cosmology below); thus, they are spared from such destruction.

10. Asaññasatta (Sanskrit: Asaṃjñasattva) (Vibhajyavāda tradition only) – This existence is solely physical in contrast to Arupaloka where the beings have no physic and they are non-percepient beings who have attained a high jhāna (similar to that of the Formless Realm). When they were striving as humans to overcome the mind, wishing to avoid the perils of perception, they have achieved a state of non-perception in which they endure in this vegetative state for a length of time. When their merit exhausted perception arises again and they fall into a lower state of existence taking rebirth in one of the realms of the Samsara.

11. Vehapphala or **Bṛhatphala** (Tib: *'bras.bu che*) – This is the existence of Devas "having fruitful result" of their previous meditation. Their lifespan is 500 mahākalpas. (Vibhajyavāda tradition). Some Anāgāmins are reborn here. The height of this world is described as 5,242,880 yojanas above the Earth.

The following two existences are described in Sarvāstivāda (Mahayana) tradition only, but not in Theravada tradition. **Puṇyaprasava** (; Tib: *bsod.nams skyes*) – The world of devas who are the "offspring of merit". The height of this world is 2,621,440 yojanas above the Earth and **Anabhraka** (Tib: *sprin.med*) – The world of the "cloudless" devas. The height of this world is 1,310,720 yojanas above the Earth.

Śubhakṛtsna worlds

The mental state of devas of the Śubhakṛtsna worlds corresponds to the third jhāna, and is characterized by a silent and peaceful joy (sukha). These devas have bodies that radiate a steady light. The Śubhakṛtsna worlds form the upper limit to the destruction of the universe at the end of a mahākalpa (see Temporal cosmology below).

12. Subhakiṇṇa or **Śubhakṛtsna** or **/ Subhakiṇha** (Tib: *dge.rgyas*) – This is the world of devas with refulgent glory and of "total beauty". Their lifespan is 64 mahākalpas (some sources: 4 mahākalpas) according to the Vibhajyavāda tradition. 64 mahākalpas is the interval between destructions of the universe by wind, including the Śubhakṛtsna worlds. The height of this world is mentioned as 655,360 yojanas above the Earth.

13. Appamāṇasubha or **Apramāṇaśubha** (Tib: *tshad.med dge*) – The world of devas of measureless glory and"limitless beauty". Their lifespan is 32 mahākalpas (Vibhajyavāda tradition). They possess "faith, virtue, learning, munificence and wisdom". The height of this world is said to be 327,680 yojanas above the Earth.

14. Parittasubha or (**Parīttaśubha** Tib: *dge.chung*) – The world of devas of limited glory and "limited beauty". Their lifespan is 16 mahākalpas. The height of this world is mentioned as 163,840 yojanas above the Earth.

Manifested Rupa Brahmas

This is the existence of manisfested Brahmas whose mental state corresponds to the second jhāna, and is characterized by delight (pīti) as well as joy (sukha); the Ābhāsvara devas are said to shout aloud in their joy, crying *aho sukham!* ("Oh joy!"). These devas have bodies that emit flashing rays of light like lightning. They are said to have similar bodies (to each other) but have diverse perceptions.

The Ābhāsvara worlds form the upper limit to the destruction of the universe by fire at the end of a mahākalpa (see Temporal cosmology below), i.e., the column of fire does not rise high enough to reach them. After the destruction of the world, beings from Ābhāsvara worlds take rebirth in newly formed worlds after a length of time as premodial form of life.

15. Ābhassara or **Ābhāsvara** (Tib: *'od.gsal*) – This is the world of devas with streaming rediance and splendor. The lifespan of the Ābhāsvara devas is 8 mahākalpas (others: 2 mahākalpas). Eight mahākalpas is the interval between destructions of the universe by water, which includes the Ābhāsvara worlds. The height of this world is described as 81,920 yojanas above the Earth.

16. Appamāṇābha or **Apramāṇābha** (Tib: *tshad.med 'od*) – The world of devas of measureless radiance. Their lifespan is 4 mahākalpas and the height of this world is mentioned as 40,960 yojanas above the Earth.

17. Parittābha or **Parīttābha** (Tib: *'od chung*) – The world of devas of "limited radiance". Their lifespan is 2 mahākalpas and the height of this world is described as 20,480 yojanas above the Earth.

Gods of different faiths

The following existence is mentioned as the realm of the God(s) of major religions. The mental state of these Brahmā gods corresponds to the first jhāna, and is characterized by observation (vitarka) and reflection (vicāra), as well as delight (pīti) and joy (sukha). These Brahmā worlds, together with the other lower worlds of the universe, are destroyed by fire at the end of a mahākalpa (see Temporal cosmology below).

18. Mahābrahmā (Tib: *tshangs.pa chen.po*) – the abode of "Great Brahmā", believed by many to be the creator of the world,with such titles "Brahmā, Great Brahmā, the Conqueror, the Unconquered, the All-Seeing, All-Powerful, the Lord, the Maker and Creator, the Ruler, Appointer and Orderer, Father of All That Have Been and Shall Be" is the Heaven of the God.

According to the **Brahmajāla Sutta** (DN.1), a Mahābrahmā is a being from the **Ābhāsvara** worlds who falls into a lower world through exhaustion of his merits and is reborn alone in this Brahma-world; forgetting his former existence as the transition is instantaneous, he imagines himself to have come into existence without cause as he does not have intrinsic knowledge of the worlds above his own. Mahābrahmā is described as 1 ½ yojanas tall and his lifespan is said to be 1 kalpa (Vibhajyavāda tradition) or 1 ½ kalpas long (Sarvāstivāda tradition), is equivalent to the total length of time between the rebuilding of the lower world and its destruction. The height of this world is described as 10,240 yojanas above the Earth.

19. Brahmapurohita (Tib: *tshangs.'khor*) – This is the world of the "Ministers of Brahmā" who were originally from the Ābhāsvara worlds, that were born as companions to Mahābrahmā after he had spent some time alone. Since they arise subsequent to his thought of a desire for companions, the Maha Brahma believes himself to be their creator, and they likewise, believe him to be their creator and their lord. They are 1 yojana in height and their lifespan is said to be ½ of a kalpa (Vibhajyavāda tradition) or a whole kalpa (Sarvāstivāda tradition). When they were reborn in a lower world at a later date, they recalled some of their last existence, and started teaching the doctrine of Maha Brahmā as the Creator and made revelations. The height of this world is described as 5,120 yojanas above the Earth.

20. Brahmapārisajja or **Brahmapāriṣadya** (Tib: *tshangs.ris*) – They are the "Councilors of Brahmā" or devas "belonging to the assembly of Brahmā". They are also called **Brahmakāyika**, but this name can be used for any of the inhabitants of the Brahma-worlds. They are half a yojana in height and their lifespan is said to be ⅓ of a kalpa (Vibhajyavāda tradition) to ½ of a kalpa (Sarvāstivāda tradition). The height of this world is described as 2,560 yojanas above the Earth.

Sensual Realms (Kāmaloka)

The beings born in the Kāmaloka (Tib: *'dod.pa'i khams*) differ in degree of happiness, but they are all under the influence or temptation of Māra, the devil and are bound by sensual desire, which causes them to downgrade and subject to potential suffering.

The Heavens

The following four worlds are bounded planes. each 80,000 yojanas square, which float in the air above the top of Mount Meru or Sumeru, which is a mythical structure that needs to be taken in allegorical sense. Although all of the worlds inhabited by devas (that is, all the worlds

down to the Cāturmahārājika world and that of the Asuras) are sometimes considered as "heavens", in the western sense, the term best applies to the four worlds listed below:

21. Paranimmita-vasavatti or **Parinirmita-vaśavartin** (Tib: *gzhan.'phrul dbang.byed*) – The heaven of devas "with power over (others') creations". These devas do not create pleasing forms that they desire for themselves, but their desires are fulfilled by the acts of other devas who wish for their favor. The ruler of this world is called Vaśavartin (Pāli: Vasavatti), who has longer life, greater beauty, more power and happiness and has more delightful sense-objects than the other devas of his world. This world is also the home of the devaputra (being of divine race) called Māra, an equivalent of the devil, who endeavors to keep all beings of the Kāmaloka in the grip of sensual pleasures. Sometimes, Māra is also called Vaśavartin, but in general these two beings are regarded as separate entity. The beings of this world are 4,500 feet (1,400 m) tall and live for 9,216,000,000 years (Sarvāstivāda tradition). The height of this world is described as1,280 yojanas above the Earth.

22. Nimmānaratī or **Nirmāṇarati** (Tib: *'phrul.dga'*)– The world of devas "delighting in their creations". The devas of this world are capable of making any appearance to please themselves. The lord of this world is called Sunirmita (Pāli Sunimmita); his wife is the rebirth of Visākhā, formerly the chief of the upāsikās (female lay devotees) of the Buddha. The beings of this world are 3,750 feet (1,140 m) tall and live for 2,304,000,000 years (Sarvāstivāda tradition). The height of this world is mentioned as 640 yojanas above the Earth.

23. Tusita or **Tuṣita** (Tib: *dga'.ldan*) – This is the world of the "joyful" devas and it is best known for being the abode in which Bodhisattvas live before being reborn in the world of humans. A few thousand years ago, the ruling Bodhisattva of this world was Śvetaketu (Pāli: Setaketu), who was reborn as Siddhārtha, and

became the Buddha Śākyamuni. The Bodhisattva Maitreya (Metteya) was a Nātha (or Nāthadeva) at that time, who later on took rebirth as Ajita to join the Buddha in human world. Although this Bodhisattva is the foremost of the dwellers in Tuṣita, the ruler of this world is another deva called Santuṣita (Pāli: Santusita) as Bodhisattva Maitreya would have to take rebirth as a human to fulfil further parami. The beings of this world are described as 3,000 feet (910 m) tall and live for 576,000,000 years (Sarvāstivāda tradition). The height of this world is described as 320 yojanas above the Earth.

24. Yāma (Tib: *'thab.bral*) – Sometimes called the "heaven without fighting", because it is the lowest of the heavens to be physically separated from the tumults of the earthly world, and thus less competition for its occupancy. These devas live in the air, free of all difficulties. Its ruler is the deva Suyāma; according to some, his wife is the rebirth of Sirimā, a courtesan of Rājagṛha in the Buddha's time who was generous to the monks. The beings of this world are 2,250 feet (690 m) tall and live for 144,000,000 years (Sarvāstivāda tradition). The height of this world is described as160 yojanas above the Earth.

The world-mountain of Meru has been described in allegorical sense for humans of that era to be able to visualize, as an immense, strangely shaped peak which arises in the center of the world, and around which the Sun and Moon revolve. Its base rests in a vast ocean, and it is surrounded by several rings of lesser mountain ranges and oceans. The three worlds listed below are all located on or around Meru: the Tavatiṃśa devas live on its peak, the Cāturmahārājika devas live on its slopes, and the Asuras live in the ocean at its base. Meru and its surrounding oceans and mountains are the home of not only these deities, but also of vast assemblies of beings of the popular mythology who sometimes intrude on the human world.

25. Tāvatiṃsa or **Trāyastriṃśa** (Tib: *sum.cu.rtsa.gsum.pa*) – The world "of the Thirty-three (devas)" is a wide flat space on the top of Mount Sumeru, filled with the gardens and palaces. Its ruler is Śakka devā Indra, "lord of the devas". Besides the eponymous Thirty-three devas, many other devas and other beings dwell there, including the attendants and many apsarases (nymphal devi). These devas are said to have a thousand devi consorts each for their sensual pleasure. The beings of this world are 1,500 feet (460 m) tall and live for 36,000,000 years (Sarvāstivāda tradition) or 3/4 of a yojana tall and live for 30,000,000 years (Vibhajyavāda tradition). The height of this world is described as 80 yojanas above the Earth.

26. Cātummahārājika or **Cāturmahārājikakāyika** (Tib: *rgyal.chen bzhi*) – The world "of the Four Great Kings" is mentioned as being situated on the lower slopes of Mount Meru, though some of its inhabitants live in the air around the mountain. Its rulers are the four Great Kings, Virūḍhaka, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Virūpākṣa, and their leader Vaiśravaṇa who rule the four corners of the world. Devas who guide the Sun and Moon are also considered as part of this world. There are also retinues of the four kings, composing of **Kumbhāṇḍas** (ogres), **Gandharvas** (winged-angels), **Nāgas** (dragons) and **Yakṣas** (goblins). They interact with humans from time to time.The beings of this world can be 750 feet (230 m) tall, or as small as a few feet and live for 9,000,000 years (Sarvāstivāda tradition) or 90,000 years (Vibhajyavāda tradition). The height of this world is from the sea level up to 40 yojanas above the Earth.

27. Asura (Tib: *lha.ma.yin*) – Asuras are fallen angels and their world situates in the space at the foot of Mount Meru, much of which is a deep ocean. It is not the Asuras' original home, but it's the place they found themselves after they were hurled out from Tavatiṃśa where they had formerly lived. The Asuras are always fighting to regain their lost kingdom on the top of Mount Sumeru, but are unable to break the barrier of the Four Great Kings. The Asuras are

divided into many groups, and have no single ruler, but among their leaders are Vemacitrin (Pāli: Vepacitti) and Rāhu.

Earthly Realms

28. Manuṣaloka (Tib: *mi*) – This is the world of humans and humanoids who live on the surface of the four planets. The mountain-rings that engird Meru are surrounded by a vast space, which fills most of the universe. The space is in turn surrounded by stars and planets in a circle called Cakkavāḷa (Cakravāḍa) or galaxy which marks the horizontal limit of the world. In this ocean of space there are four islands or planets. Because of the immenseness of the space, they cannot be reached from each other by ordinary vessels, although in the past, when the cakkarvartin kings ruled, communication between the planents was possible by means of **cakkaratana** (**cakraratna**), which a cakkarvartin and his retinue could use to fly between the planets. The four planets are:

Jambudīpa or **Jambudvīpa (planet earth)** which is located in the south (of the galaxy) and is the dwelling of human beings. It is said to be shaped "like a cart" and it is 10,000 yojanas in extent (Vibhajyavāda tradition) or has a perimeter of 6,000 yojanas (Sarvāstivāda tradition). The continent takes its name from a giant Jambu tree (Syzygium cumini), 100 yojanas tall, which grows in the middle of the continent. Every continent has one of these giant trees. All Buddhas appear in Jambudīpa. The people here are five to six feet tall and their lifespan varies between 80,000 and 10 years depending on evolution.

Pubbavideha or **Pūrvavideha** is located in the east, and is shaped like a semicircle with the flat side pointing westward (i.e., towards Meru). It is 7,000 yojanas in extent (Vibhajyavāda tradition) or has a perimeter of 6,350 yojanas of which the flat side is 2,000 yojanas long (Sarvāstivāda tradition). Its tree is the acacia. The

people here are about 12 feet (3.7 m) tall and they live for 250 years.

Aparagoyāna or **Aparagodānīya** is located in the west, and is shaped like a circle with a circumference of about 7,500 yojanas (Sarvāstivāda tradition). The tree of this continent is a giant Kadamba tree. The human inhabitants of this continent do not live in houses but sleep on the ground. They are about 24 feet (7.3 m) tall and they live for 500 years.

Uttarakuru is located in the north, and is shaped like a square. It has a perimeter of 8,000 yojanas, being 2,000 yojanas on each side. This continent's tree is called a kalpavṛkṣa (Pāli: kapparukkha) or kalpa-tree, because it lasts for the entire kalpa. The inhabitants of Uttarakuru are said to be extraordinarily wealthy. They do not need to labor for a living, as their food grows by itself, and they have no private property. They have cities built in the air. They are about 48 feet (15 m) tall and live for 1,000 years, and they are under the protection of Vaiśravaṇa.

29. Tiracchāna-yoni or **Tiryagyoni-loka** (Tib: *dud.'gro*) – This world comprises all members of the animal kingdom that are capable of feeling suffering, from the smallest insect to the elephant.

30. Petaloka or **Pretaloka** (Tib: *yi.dvags*) – The peta, or "purgatory hungry ghosts", are mostly dwellers on earth, in parallel existence to humans and animals. They have different sizes and shapes and live for the most part in deserted places and waste lands.

31. Hells

Niraya in Pali or **Naraka** (Tib: *dmyal.ba*) is the name given to one of the worlds of greatest suffering, usually translated into English as "hell" or "purgatory". As with the other existence, a being is born into one of these purgatory worlds as a result of his kamma, and resides there,

unlike mentioned in other faith, for a finite length of time until his kamma has achieved its full result; after which, he will be reborn in one of the higher worlds as the result of an earlier kamma that had not yet matured. The mentality of a being in the hells corresponds to states of extreme fear, helpless and anguish in human experience.

Physically, Niraya is thought of as a series of layers extending below Jambudīpa into the earth. There are several schemes for counting these Nirayas and enumerating their torments. One of the more common is that of the Eight Cold Nirayas and Eight Hot Nirayas.

Cold Hells

1) **Arbuda** – the "blister" Niraya where these hell beings suffer blisters on their body.
2) **Nirarbuda** – the "burst blister" Niraya where the blisters to let out fouls smelling pus and discharge.
3) **Aṭaṭa** – the Niraya of shivering and extreme cold.
4) **Hahava** – the Niraya of lamentation
5) **Huhuva** – the Niraya of clattering teeth
6) **Utpala** – the "blue lotus" Niraya
7) **Padma** – the "lotus" Niraya
8) **Mahāpadma** – the "great lotus" Niraya

Each lifespan in these Nirayas is twenty times that of the preceeding one.

Hot Hells

1) **Sañjīva** – the "reviving" Niraya where hell beings collapsed in pain and then revived again and again. Lifespan in this Niraya is $162*10^{10}$ years long.
2) **Kālasūtra** – the "black thread" Niraya where hell beings are tied in black thread. Lifespan in this Niraya is $1296*10^{10}$ years long.

3) **Saṃghāta** – the "crushing" Niraya where hell beings are being crushed as a touture. Lifespan in this Naraka is $10,368*10^{10}$ years long.
4) **Raurava** – the "screaming" Niraya where hell beings are screaming with pain. Lifespan in this Naraka is $82,944*10^{10}$ years long.
5) **Mahāraurava** – the "greater screaming" Niraya where hell beings are continuously screaming from pain. Lifespan in this Naraka is $663,552*10^{10}$ years long.
6) **Tapana** – the "heating" Niraya or the hell of fire. Lifespan in this Naraka is $5,308,416*10^{10}$ years long.
7) **Pratāpana** – the "greater heating" Niraya or the hell of torture by extreme heat. Lifespan in this Niraya is $42,467,328*10^{10}$ years long.
8) **Avīci** – the "uninterrupted" Niraya or hell of continuous torture and suffering. Lifespan in this Naraka is $339,738,624*10^{10}$ years long.

Where is Hell?

The existence of hell has been mentioned in almost every religion and Buddhism is no exception. In Buddhist literature, hell is graded into eight different degrees of torment and suffering. Its location is said to be situated at a depth of 1500 *yojana* (approx. 30000 kilometres) in this planet.[6] There are accounts of living beings in hell who had surfaced from the deeper layers of the earth in the Buddhist *Jataka* stories. From this, it may be postulated that hell could situate inside the deeper layers of the earth as the mantle, the outer and inner core of the earth are hot enough to be comparable to that of hell's fire.

Some may argue how can any living thing live inside the deep layers of the earth. If we accept parallel existence of another world and that these beings can pass through walls, metal objects, water etc., there is no reason that they can live inside the earth.

The foundations of the earth

It is explained in Hindu cosmology that all of the structures of the earth, Sumeru (Mt. Meru) and the rest, extend downward to a depth of 80,000 yojanas below sea level – the same as the height of Sumeru (Mt. Meru) above sea level. Below this is a layer of "golden earth", a substance compact and firm enough to support the weight of Sumeru. It is 320,000 yojanas in depth and so extends to 400,000 yojanas below sea level.

The layer of golden earth in turn rests upon a layer of water, which is 8,000,000 yojanas in depth, going down to 8,400,000 yojanas below sea level. Below the layer of water is a "circle of wind", which is 16,000,000 yojanas in depth and also much broader in extent, supporting 1,000 different worlds upon it.

Where does the mythical Mt. Meru exist?

Francis Story wrote in his description of the Magic Mountain [(7)] as follows - “the cosmography of ancient India had its sacred mountain - *Meru*, sometimes called *Sineru*, *Sumeru*, *Hemameru* or *Mahaneru*. It was thought to be situated in the exact centre of the Cakravala (*Cakkavala)*, or world system, and so North of the Southern continent*, Jambudipa.* The fact that *Meru* was located in the North of the system suggests identification with the Himalayas, and the name *Hemameru* gives support to this possibility. There can be little doubt that in early times the idea that an immense peak lay beyond the tall, mysterious boundaries of the Himalayas range, which cut off the horizon from the plain dwellers below, took hold of the imagination, and it was in those high, remote solitudes that the gods of the storm and blizzard, the first nature gods, were believed to have their home.”

However, Mount *Meru* has been mentioned many times in the Canon and Francis Story suggested that the Buddha was not concerned with teaching geography, and the early Buddhists did nothing to change the ideas prevalent in Vedic India with regard to the conformation of the earth. The existence of Mount *Meru* was taken literally and a precise

description of it was given together with other details of Cakravalas (*Cakkavala*). According to this cosmology there is an infinite number of Cakravalas (*Cakkavala*) and each is a closed system having the general features of all the rest. Each Cakravala (*Cakkavala)* has a Mount *Meru* as its centre, surrounded by four great continents, with the scrupulous attention to statistics, which distinguished the early Buddhists, exact dimensions are given. On its summit is situated the *Tavatimsa-deva-loka*, the heaven of the Thirty-three (gods) under the rulership of *Sakka*, the Buddhist equivalent of *Indra (Inda)*. This is the second lowest *Deva* realm, below which lies *Catumaharajika,* the realm of the four great kings of the deities. At the base of the mountain lies the *Asura-bhavana*, home of the *Asuras* or Titans or Fallen Angels.

It is often mentioned in the commentaries that the 25 heavenly realms, five out of six *deva* realms, excluding the *Catumaharajika* which is said to be nearest to the human world, and the 20 *brahma* realms are extraterrestrial. At this point, one may question if these entities can be regarded as what we call the extraterrestrial beings and the UFOs that they used for travelling.

Firstly, in the Buddhist texts there are accounts of these *deva* and *brahma* who came to visit Lord Buddha and the latter-day saints or the *arahat*. It is interesting to note that some of these visitors use a form of machinery transports *(Sekkya-yin) (cakkaratana-yanavara)* - the rotating vehicle, but most of them did not require any vehicle as they can travel anywhere using clairvoyance.

Secondly, there is another possibility that the extraterrestrial beings and their UFOs are human beings like us from outer space. The Burmese cosmology, which in a sense is a Buddhist cosmology, although it has been shaped by millennia of Brahman influence, regarded our abode as *Jambudipa,* which is the Southern-right Island of the centre of the universe. Mount *Meru* is the cosmo-figure at the centre, which is surrounded by four islands at the cardinal points. Some people regarded *Jambudipa* as the Euro-Asian continent, with the belief that Mount *Meru* exists on this planet. It appears that it was used as an analogy to visualize the position of the various abodes that situate in the universe for the people of that era to understand, based upon the fact

that the 25 realms of *devas* and brahmas are extraterrestrial and could not be on the earth.

The Buddha is omnipotent and had the power to know everything. He could not have used the word Mount *Meru* if he wanted to refer anything to the Himalayas, as has been suggested by Francis Story. The modern picture of the universe describes that it is uniform on a large scale, that is, it looks similar when viewed from a distance. It has a peculiar similarity to the description of the *Cakravala (Cakkavala)* and the Mount *Meru*, which has a characteristic and striking feature of uniformity throughout all world-systems. The centre of the universe may be compared to an illusionary mountain of galaxies, stars and planets which look similar when viewed from different angles and take the form of a mountain. The earth is a medium sized planet orbiting around an average star in the outer suburbs of an ordinary spiral galaxy that is about one hundred thousand light years across and is slowly rotating. There are some hundred thousand million galaxies that can be seen using modern telescopes, each galaxy itself containing some hundred thousand million stars.(3)

Our earth is not the centre of the universe according to the Buddhist cosmology and the similarity of its position with the modern description in our spiral galaxy is remarkable. However, it is not clear whether Mount *Meru*, which is said to be the centre, is meant to describe just our galaxy or the universe itself.

All the islands surrounding the Mount *Meru* are said to be inhabited, but in various degrees of development. It is mentioned that the living beings live in northern islands (*uttarakuru*) are more advance than us, as they can obtain whatever they need, instantaneously growing on trees and live for a thousand years in a perfect youthful shape. This millennial folklore may lead us to consider that there is intelligent life outside this world apart from the heavenly beings.

The world or *Kabar* in Myanmar language stands for earth planet that would last for some 4320 million years. There are many worlds that are destroyed and reformed on a regular basis. All living things undergo constant changes and at times when all the worlds have dissipated, only

the four upper realms of Brahma remained. Then, life would restart and develop when the conditions become favourable and evolution process will occur again.

The position of *Jambudipa,* in present world, is at the fifth plane of the Mount *Meru*. The first heavenly abode is called *Catumaharajica,* which is about 42000 *Yojana* (approx. 840,000 kilometres) away from the earth. The peak or the seventh plane is occupied by the worlds of *Tavatimsa* which is a further 42000 odd *Yojana* away from the first abode. Other four heavenly abodes are said to be at 42000 *Yojana* intervals above each other. The three parallel worlds of Brahma are situated at 5508000 *Yojana* (110.16 million kilometres) above the highest heavenly abode and the rest of the Brahma worlds are again at 5508000 *Yojana* intervals from each other. The inhabitants of Brahma worlds are said to have a life span of more than 20000 *Kabars* (*Kabarloka*) or world- systems and those of the highest Brahma can live for 921600000 worlds.(6)

Sahasra cosmology

While the vertical cosmology describes the arrangement of the worlds vertically, the sahasra (Sanskrit: "thousand") cosmology describes how they are grouped horizontally. The four heavens of the Kāmaloka, as mentioned, occupy a limited space no bigger than the top of Mount Sumeru (Meru). The three Brahmā-worlds, however, stretch out as far as the mountain-wall of Cakravāḍa, filling the entire sky. This whole group of worlds, from Mahābrahmā down to the foundations of water, constitutes a single world-system or universe. It corresponds to the extent of the universe that is destroyed by fire at the end of one mahākalpa.

Above Mahābrahmā are the Ābhāsvara worlds. These are not only higher but also wider in extent; they cover 1,000 separate world-systems, each with its own Sumeru, Cakravāḍa, Sun, Moon, and four continents. This system of 1,000 worlds is called a **sāhasra-cūḍika-**

lokadhātu, or "small chiliocosm". It corresponds to the extent of the universe that is destroyed by water at the end of 8 mahākalpas.

Above the Ābhāsvara worlds are the Śubhakṛtsna worlds, which cover 1,000 chiliocosms, or 1,000,000 world-systems. This larger system is called a **dvisāhasra-madhyama-lokadhātu**, or "medium dichiliocosm". It corresponds to the extent of the universe that is destroyed by wind at the end of 64 mahākalpas.

Likewise, above the Śubhakṛtsna worlds, the Śuddhāvāsa and Bṛhatphala worlds cover 1,000 dichiliocosms, or 1,000,000,000 world-systems. This largest grouping is called a **trisāhasra-mahāsāhasra-lokadhātu** or "great trichiliocosm".

Temporal cosmology

Buddhist temporal cosmology describes how the universe comes into being and is dissolved. Like other Indian cosmologies, it assumes an infinite span of time and is cyclical. This does not mean that the same events occur in identical form with each cycle, but merely that, as with the cycles of day and night or summer and winter, certain natural events occur over and over to give some structure to time.

The basic unit of time measurement is the **mahākalpa** or "Great Eon". The exact length of this time in human years is never defined exactly, but it is meant to be very long, to be measured in billions of years if not longer.

A **mahākalpa** is divided into four kalpas or "eons", each distinguished from the others by the stage of evolution of the universe during that kalpa. The four kalpas are:

- **Vivartakalpa** "Eon of evolution" – during this kalpa the universe comes into existence.

- **Vivartasthāyikalpa** "Eon of evolution-duration" – during this kalpa the universe remains in existence in a steady state.

- **Saṃvartakalpa** "Eon of dissolution" – during this kalpa the universe dissolves.

- **Saṃvartasthāyikalpa** "Eon of dissolution-duration" – during this kalpa the universe remains in a state of emptiness.

Each one of these kalpas is divided into twenty **antarakalpas** (Pāli **antarakappa**, "inside eons") each of about the same length. For the Saṃvartasthāyikalpa this division is merely nominal, as nothing changes from one antarakalpa to the next; but for the other three kalpas it marks an interior cycle within the kalpa.

Vivartakalpa

The Vivartakalpa begins with the arising of the primordial wind, which begins the process of building up the structures of the universe that had been destroyed at the end of the last mahākalpa. As the extent of the destruction can vary, the nature of this evolution can vary as well, but it always takes the form of beings from a higher world being born into a lower world. The example of a Mahābrahmā being the rebirth of a deceased Ābhāsvara deva is just one instance of this, which continues throughout the Vivartakalpa until all the worlds are filled from the Brahmaloka down to Naraka. During the Vivartakalpa the first humans appear; they are not like present-day humans, but are beings shining in their own light, capable of moving through the air without mechanical aid, living for a very long time, and not requiring sustenance; they are more like a type of lower deity than present-day humans are.

Over time, they acquire a taste for physical nutriment, and as they consume it, their bodies become heavier and more like human bodies; they lose their ability to shine, and begin to acquire differences in their appearance, and their length of life decreases. They differentiate into

two sexes and begin to become sexually active. Then greed, theft and violence arise among them, and they establish social distinctions and government and elect a king to rule them, called Mahāsammata, "the great appointed one". Some of them begin to hunt and eat the flesh of animals, which have by now come into existence. These developments are described in the Aggañña Sutta (DN.27).

Vivartasthāyikalpa

First antarakalpa

The Vivartasthāyikalpa begins when the first being is born into Naraka, thus filling the entire universe with beings. During the first antarakalpa of this eon, human lives are declining from a vast but unspecified number of years (but at least several tens of thousands of years) toward the modern lifespan of less than 100 years. At the beginning of the antarakalpa, people are still generally happy. They live under the rule of a universal monarch or "wheel-turning king" (cakravartin), who conquer. The Mahāsudassana-sutta (DN.17) tells of the life of a cakravartin king, Mahāsudassana (Sanskrit: Mahāsudarśana) who lived for 336,000 years. The Cakkavatti-sīhanāda-sutta (DN.26) tells of a later dynasty of cakravartins, Daḷhanemi (Sanskrit: Dṛḍhanemi) and five of his descendants, who had a lifespan of over 80,000 years. The seventh of this line of cakravartins broke with the traditions of his forefathers, refusing to abdicate his position at a certain age , pass the throne on to his son, and enter the life of a śramaṇa. As a result of his subsequent misrule, poverty increased; as a result of poverty, theft began; as a result of theft, capital punishment was instituted; and as a result of this contempt for life, murders and other crimes became rampant.

The human lifespan now quickly decreased from 80,000 to 100 years, apparently decreasing by about half with each generation (this is perhaps not to be taken literally), while with each generation other crimes and evils increased: lying, adultery, evil speech, greed and hatred, wrong views, incest and other sorts of sexual abnormalities,

disrespect for parents and elders. During this period, according to the Mahāpadāna-sutta (DN.14) three of the four Buddhas of this antarakalpa lived: Krakucchanda Buddha (Pāli: Kakusandha), at the time when the lifespan was 40,000 years; Kanakamuni Buddha (Pāli: Konāgamana) when the lifespan was 30,000 years; and Kāśyapa Buddha (Pāli: Kassapa) when the lifespan was 20,000 years.

Our present time is taken to be toward the end of the first antarakalpa of this Vivartasthāyikalpa, when the lifespan is less than 100 years, after the life of Śākyamuni Buddha (Pāli: Sakyamuni), who lived to the age of 80.

The remainder of the antarakalpa is prophesied to be miserable: lifespan will continue to decrease, and all the evil tendencies of the past will reach their ultimate in destructiveness. People will live no longer than ten years, and will marry at five; foods will be poor and tasteless; no form of morality will be acknowledged. The most contemptuous and hateful people will become the rulers. Incest will be rampant. Hatred between people, even members of the same family, will grow until people think of each other as hunters do of their prey.

Eventually a great war will ensue, in which the most hostile and aggressive will arm themselves and go out to kill each other. The less aggressive will hide in forests and other secret places while the war rages. This war marks the end of the first antarakalpa.

Second antarakalpa

At the end of the war, the survivors will emerge from their hiding places and repent their evil habits. As they begin to do good, their lifespan increases, and the health and welfare of the human race will also increase with it. After a long time, the descendants of those with a 10-year lifespan will live for 80,000 years, and at that time there will be a cakravartin king named Saṅkha. During his reign, the current bodhisattva in the Tuṣita heaven will descend and be reborn under the

name of Ajita. He will enter the life of a śramaṇa and will gain perfect enlightenment as a Buddha; and he will then be known by the name of Maitreya (Pāli: Metteyya).

After Maitreya's time, the world will again worsen, and the lifespan will gradually decrease from 80,000 years to 10 years again, each antarakalpa being separated from the next by devastating war, with peaks of high civilization and morality in the middle. After the 19th antarakalpa, the lifespan will increase to 80,000 and then not decrease, because the Vivartasthāyikalpa will have come to an end.

Saṃvartakalpa

The Saṃvartakalpa begins when beings cease to be born in Naraka. This cessation of birth then proceeds in reverse order up the vertical cosmology, i.e., pretas then cease to be born, then animals, then humans, and so on up to the realms of the deities.

When these worlds as far as the Brahmaloka are devoid of inhabitants, a great fire consumes the entire physical structure of the world. It burns all the worlds below the Ābhāsvara worlds. When they are destroyed, the Saṃvartasthāyikalpa begins.

Saṃvartasthāyikalpa

There is nothing to say about the Saṃvartasthāyikalpa, since nothing happens in it below the Ābhāsvara worlds. It ends when the primordial wind begins to blow and build the structure of the worlds up again.

Other destructions

The destruction by fire is the normal type of destruction that occurs at the end of the Saṃvartakalpa. But every eighth mahākalpa, after seven destructions by fire, there is a destruction by water. This is more

devastating, as it eliminates not just the Brahma worlds but also the Ābhāsvara worlds.

Every sixty-fourth mahākalpa, after 56 destructions by fire and 7 destructions by water, there is a destruction by wind. This is the most devastating of all, as it also destroys the Śubhakṛtsna worlds. The higher worlds are never destroyed.

Vaiśravaṇa in Theravāda tradition

In the Pāli scriptures of the Theravāda Buddhist tradition, Vaiśravaṇa is called **Vessavaṇa.** Vessavaṇa is one of the Cātummahārājāno, or four Great Kings, each of whom rules over a specific direction. Vessavaṇa's realm is the northern quadrant of the world, including the land of Uttarakuru. According to some suttas, he takes his name from a region there called Visāṇa; he also has a city there called Ālakamandā which is a byword for wealth. Vessavaṇa governs the yakkhas – beings with a nature between 'fairy' and 'ogre'.

Vessavaṇa's wife is named Bhuñjatī, and he has five daughters, Latā, Sajjā, Pavarā, Acchimatī, and Sutā. He has a nephew called Puṇṇaka, a yakkha, husband of the nāga woman Irandatī. He has a chariot called Nārīvāhana. His weapon was the **gadāvudha** (Sanskrit: gadāyudha/garuda), but he only used it before he became a follower of the Buddha.

Vessavaṇa has the name "Kuvera" from a name he had from a past life as a rich brahmin mill-owner, who gave all the produce of one of his seven mills to charity, and provided alms to the needy for 20,000 years. He was reborn in the Cātummahārājikā heaven as a reward for these good kammas.

As with all the Buddhist deities, Vessavaṇa is properly the name of an office (filled for life) rather than a permanent individual. Each Vessavaṇa

is mortal, and when he dies, he will be replaced by a new Vessavaṇa. Like other beings of the Cātummahārājika world, his lifespan is 90,000 years (other sources say nine million years). Vessavaṇa has the authority to grant the yakkhas particular areas (e.g., a lake) to protect, and these are usually assigned at the beginning of a Vessavaṇa's reign.

When the Buddha was born, Vessavaṇa became his follower, and eventually attained the stage of **sotāpanna** (Sanskrit: **srotaāpanna**, one who has only seven more lives before enlightenment). He often brought the Buddha and his followers' messages from the gods and other humans, and protected them. He presented to the Buddha the Āṭānāṭā verses, which Buddhists meditating in the forest could use to ward off the attacks of wild yakkhas or other supernatural beings who do not have faith in the Buddha. These verses are an early form of paritta chanting.

Bimbisāra, King of Magadha, after his death was reborn as a yakkha called Janavasabha in the retinue of Vessavaṇa.

In the early years of Buddhism, Vessavaṇa was worshipped at trees dedicated to him as shrines. Some people appealed to him to grant them children.

Are gods eternal?

The *Brahmas,* having live very long and witnessed the formation of many world systems, regard themselves as Gods and the creators of the universe. They consider themselves that they are immortal. As there is no morbid suffering, they think they have reached a perfect state, immune from the law of impermanence.

In Buddhist texts, it is mentioned that Lord Buddha was invited by a Brahma while he was visiting the Heavens to give discourses. When Buddha explained his philosophy about the liberation of *Dukkha,* a

general form of all suffering including impermanence, the Brahma proclaimed that he has already reached a perfect existence.

Then, Buddha asked him to look for his colleague Brahma with whom he had strived together in their previous life as humans to obtain this state. The Brahma could not find his colleague as he had already passed away and was reborn in a lower realm. Only then he realised that he too could not escape impermanence. Nobody can escape from death if one takes a rebirth in any form. Even gods who have great life spans will have to die at a certain date when the *kamma* which has made them to obtain these positions exhausts.

Buddhism has been labelled as a religion that preaches the importance of self-annihilation, as unlike any other Faiths, it teaches that the ultimate goal for every Buddhist should be to be free from any form of existence, since every existence associates with an inert form of impermanence; thus, subject to suffering as every existence will end in death, sooner or later. It states that only Nibbana, which is not a place or an abode is free of rebirth and death, thus, a perfect goal for every soul. Buddhism does not deny the existence of a soul, but expresses it in a different way, and emphasizes that it is neither eternal nor permanent. We can visualize that physical body can perish, but what about the soul? If soul is also composed of some form of matter, is it possible to annihilate it altogether?



Let us suppose that what we have come across earlier in a digital photograph of the celebration of the Battle of Britain, the orbs that are floating in the air are souls, as they have no body and are not visible to a naked eye. If we magnify the image, we can find that the rounded orbs have some form of structure inside that is coiled up, something like the DNA strands of a cell. If those orbs were souls, we can hypothesize that they are made up of some form of matter.

The annihilation principle of morbid matter [3]

Pauli's exclusion principle says that two similar particles cannot exist in the same state, that is, they cannot have both the same position and the same velocity, within the limits given by the uncertainty principle. In simple words it means that every particle will not stay in the same position for long and is thus subjected to impermanence. It is predicted that protons, which make up much of the mass of ordinary matter, can spontaneously decay into lighter particles such as anti electrons which would collide with electrons, annihilating each other and giving off high energy radiation which is made up of particles of integer spin. This hypothesis has now been proved by scientists by producing anti-electron particles using particle accelerator in the laboratory. However, in natural conditions, the three quarks inside a proton do not have enough energy to change into anti electrons, but very occasionally one of them may acquire sufficient energy to make the transition because the uncertainty principle means that the energy of the quarks inside the proton cannot be fixed exactly, and the proton would decay.

The probability of a quark gaining such energy is however, so low that one is likely to have to wait at least a figure of 1 followed by 30 zero years, which is much longer than the time since the Big Bang (1+10 zeros). This means that unless one tries to produce anti-self particles actively, self annihilation of the basic building blocks could not be possible. We may die, but matter that consists in our body and mind (soul) will not perish. It will be reconstituted in another form shaped by of our own wilful deeds (*kamma*) and we will re-circulate in the cycle of rebirths indefinitely.

Chapter 3

The Causes

Samudaya is the origin of Dukkha

Any form of physical or mental suffering, any inconvenience, impermanence and instability are the result of *samudaya*. This *Pali* term is a general description of our attachments, cravings, desires and greed which are connected with our senses and defile us to aversion, ill will and delusion. Conjoined with the belief in the existence of eternal soul it is the primary cause of our continuation in the *Samsara*.

We think for ourselves and do actions accordingly, for our benefit, without considering that any action that we do may harm or cause inconveniences for others. Actions are performed intentionally or unintentionally. All volitional acts and thoughts become *kamma,* which will react on the doer sooner or later. One stops doing new *kamma*, only when that person has achieved the ultimate realization of the non-existence of self or personality view - known as the *atta-ditthi,* and also to be freed totally from the *asava* -defilements, through intensive and proper insight meditation. Until then, one will have the *asava*-drive and will keep on doing things physically and mentally, which is the cause of recycling in the *Samsara* and the roots of *dukkha.* There are four kinds of *asava* defilement:

1) Enjoyment in sensual pleasures *(kammasava)*
2) Desire for existence/rebirth (*bhavasava*)
3) Speculation or hearsay (*ditthisava*)
4) Ignorance or lack of insight (*avijjasava*)

A person who has totally freed oneself from *asava* is called an *arahat*, an enlightened one. Such a person only will not make any new *kamma* in whatever actions he or she does. Otherwise, every action and

thought becomes a new *kamma* and is classified as wholesome or unwholesome with reference to the Buddhist moral code.

Ten unwholesome actions *(dasa-duccarita)*

1) Intentional killing or torturing of any life form that can suffer;
2) Intentional stealing of any kind;
3) Misconduct in sensual desires such as sexual misconduct, alcohol and substance abuse;
4) Intentional lies that may harm others;
5) Slandering, backbiting or setting one people against another;
6) Using rude, vulgar, harsh or abusive talk;
7) Talking frivolously or trivial and silly conversations that waste time that one should spend it in something more worthwhile;
8) Covetousness or strong desires for sensual pleasures;
9) Ill-will, and
10) Wrong views.

Kammic effects

Why one is reborn in the realms of deprivation? If one committed the unwholesome actions there would be immediate and delayed effects and would also determine the quality of next life. Those who have done these unwholesome actions repeatedly and with great enthusiasm, they will go to the four woeful states (*catu-apāya*) or the states of deprivation.

Can this generalisation be over-ruled?

However, this is just a generalisation for those who do not practise purification (*visuddhi*). If one has developed remorse (*samvega*) for one's bad actions in the past and practised moral precepts (*sila)* and has done insight meditation (*vipassana*) to develop right concentration

and awareness (Samadhi*)*, and obtained insights (*panna)* one could always overrule this generalisation and can reborn in good destinations.

It is open for everybody, provided if one does not commit the five grave sins (*pancā-nantariya*), like killing one's own mother, father, killing an enlightened person (*arahat*), causes a split among the Order (*Sangha)* or physically harmful to the Buddha. The fifth cardinal sin - harming of the Buddha, which may not be applicable in this era, but we must remember that there can be *pacceka*-Buddha*s* who got enlightened by themselves and do not teach others in every period of time. These are some of the factors that hinder or obstruct someone from enlightenment. If one develops a lesser noble status called a *cula-sotapanna*, which does not require enlightenment (*Nibbana* perception) one can safely be freed from a rebirth in any of the deprived states, such as animals, ghosts (*peta*), demons (*asura*), or hell beings.

The four woeful and deprived states of rebirths

The flowing destinations are regarded as deprived states to be reborn as per the Buddhist concept.

Asura or fallen angels, demons, dragons and goblins are the highest among the deprived state of rebirth. It is believed that those who are particularly crazy for power will become Asuras in the next life.

The next in line comes the Peta or ghosts and spirits. Those who are mean and have extreme attachments to persons and things will be reborn as Petas.

Animals are also regarded as deprived state to be reborn.Those who are lustful, and have passions and strong desires for animate or inanimate objects will be reborn as animals.

Those who are cruel and take pleasure in torturing and killing humans and larger animals are believed to be reborn in hell.

After being reborn in these states of deprivation till their bad Kamma exhaust, they may be reborn as humans again, but they can retain disabilities and birth defects, if the *Kamma* is very grave.

One who commits killing may be reborn as a physically deformed person, ugly, weak and feeble, slow and inactive, easily and unreasonably frighten, short lived and deprived of children, relatives and friends. Some of these can be affected in the same life and some in the future depending upon the intensity of the *kamma*.

One who commits stealing may be reborn as a helpless and poor person, often bankrupt and their properties are prone to destruction by natural disasters or by other means. Their wishes may never be fulfilled.

One who commits wrongful sexual acts may be reborn as a detestable person having many enemies, less fortunate in life, being reborn as a transvestite, homosexual, obscure or low class woman ashamed in public and always have to separate from the loved ones.

One who tells lies may be reborn as a person who stammers and stutters, has unsightly teeth and foul breath, unpleasant voices, has dry and rough skin, unsteady mind and mental deficiencies.

One who indulges in taking intoxicants or substance abuse may be reborn as a person who is indecisive or ignorant of right or wrong, lethargic, heedless, shameless, ungrateful, utterly devoid of conscience and is prone to commit wrong deeds.[5]

Ten meritorious deeds

Wholesome deeds are the ones that lead to the cultivation and growth of one's own mind by refraining from the above 10 unwholesome actions and observing the following ten wholesome meritorious deeds:

1) charity of any kind and any amount (*dāna*);
2) observance of precepts pertaining to the unwholesome deeds (*sila*);
3) meditation and development of an understanding or insight (*bhāvanā*);
4) rendering service to elders and to those who are in need (*veyyāvacca*);

5) paying respect to the Buddha, his teachings and the Order, parents, elders and teachers (*apacāyana*);

6) sharing merits with other sentient beings (*pattidāna*);

7) rejoicing at others merits(*pattānumodanā*);

8) listening to *dhamma* (*dhammassavana*);

9) teaching and preaching *dhamma* (*dhammadesanā*); and,

10) the knowledge of cause and effect, and faith in *Kamma* as the root of every major incidence in life (*dinnijukamma*).

Effects of wholesomeness

The result of the wholesome deeds - *kamma* is to be reborn in the realms of a good destination. The effects of keeping the five precepts are to be reborn as a human. Faith in wholesomeness, generosity and the abstinence from the eight sins will result in a rebirth in one of the six heavenly realms of *Deva* or angels (Deities).

Meditation and the development of mind which results in the attainment of jhana or mental purifications will lead to a rebirth in the highest 20 realms of Brahma-gods; attainment of various levels of vipassana (insight meditation) will result in a rebirth in the realms of happiness and total liberation from suffering.

Nibbana - the ultimate and total liberation

The Buddhist philosophy regards Nibbana as the ultimate goal, and unlike other faiths, Heaven is not the final place as it believes one can die from Heaven and can take rebirth in deprived states in the Samsara. Lord Buddha has shown a method containing eightfold path to escape from the cycle of rebirths and will lead one to *Nibbana*, the ultimate goal for the liberation from any form of impermanence.

It is a state of knowledge where no being of any physical capability or supernatural power can reach or perceive without pursuing these eightfold methods. *Nibbana* is a state of perfection, where there is

eternal peace and tranquillity, where there is no birth and death, no sensuality and no morbid matter of any kind exist.

Many sceptics have tried to label *Nibbana* as self-annihilation. Traditional Buddhists refute the term annihilation as it conveys a negative view. Many scholars have tried to describe the definition of *Nibbana* with negations as well as with some positive descriptions, but do not use the term annihilation (see later discussion on same subject).

It is one of a few questions that the Buddha did not give an outright answer, and this term has been subjected to debate and controversy in the period after the Buddha's demise. Those who cling to the idea of existence of some unknown force or power that may exist after the final liberation of *Nibbana* in the Buddha*s* and *Arahats* refute annihilation strongly.

There is no such strong denial, nor any affirmation given by the established *Arahats* of the recent era, who had perceived the Truth and the *Nibbana*. In order to explore this question assertively, I would now discuss annihilation from the scientific view.

Is self-annihilation possible?

In the past, a physical law stated that matter could never be destroyed completely and if *Nibbana* was self-annihilation it could not be possible from the scientific view. When we die, our body returns to its elementary forms and our mind recycle to take a new body in an appropriate form.

Therefore, we are not annihilated though despite destruction of the previous mind and body at death. We take a new body and a new mind immediately without any interval, which happens so quickly as to regard that it is continuous. Normally, annihilation of either mind or body is impossible. However, as science develops, we now know that every particle can have an antiparticle. If a proton or neutron, which makes the morbid matter, collides with its antiparticle, they annihilate each other giving off high energy radiation.

Matter on earth is made up mainly of protons and neutrons, which are in turn made up of quarks. There are no anti protons or anti neutrons, made up of anti quarks in nature except for a few that

physicists produce in large particle accelerators. It is also true of the matter in our galaxy as evidenced from cosmic rays. Therefore it is unlikely to have anti-worlds and anti-people made out of an antiparticle in nature.[3]

If one has developed enough power to produce intentionally an anti-self or anti-particles of the five aggregates, then one would vanish from the universe in a great flash of radiation. This may be coined as the *Nibbana*, if it ever has a sense of annihilation, since the accounts of events happened at the death of Buddha were similar to that of the particle annihilation and no ordinary being can find out what has happened beyond the great flash of light that had said to reach every realm in the universe.

The final *Nibbana* may have a component of annihilation of matter though, even if there was to be any existence beyond the final liberation as proposed by traditional Buddhists.

Lesser stages of enlightenment could perceive *Nibbana* while they are alive and all Buddhas and *Arahats* can perceive *Nibbana* at will when they are alive. By this fact alone, *Nibbana* is not strictly annihilation as it can be perceived while alive although annihilation of matter and self might be possible at the death of such persons. One could only discover the Truth by following the method laid down by the Buddha who predicted that every competent person with enough effort could perceive *Nibbana* in this very life, without undergoing the self-annihilation first.

Chapter 4:

The Method

The Method for Total Liberation (*Magga*)

There are eightfold ways to observe the laws stated previously. The objective of these paths is to purify one-self physically and mentally, and to view things in the ultimate sense rather than on their apparent values, which one is doing. The off-spin of this practice will enable one to verify the presence of life after death, and all the mysteries will be solved when one reaches the goal.

These eightfold methods can be grouped into three categories of practices:

(a) *sila* - an ethical conduct - moral practice to purify our body and speech;

(b) *samadhi* - mental discipline - the practice of will power to control and concentrate our mind on a particular object of meditation; and

(c) *panna* - wisdom, the development of mental purification or insight into one's own nature.

Each path will lead to another and are synergistic to each other. Each path may be practised separately and will give a definite result, but the amalgamation of all the paths could only lead to *panna* or wisdom and the total liberation from suffering. The results are immediate and can be verified although it needs certain mental attainments to verify some of the results.

The right view (*samma-ditthi*)

There are three kinds of right view:

- ***Belief in kamma:*** whatever the outcome is the results of wholesome or unwholesome actions.
- ***Faith in effects*** of 10 unwholesome acts and 10 wholesome deeds resulting in reaching different planes of realism.
- ***Understanding of the four noble truths***: having the knowledge about the suffering, the origin of suffering, cessation of suffering, and the course leading to the cessation.

These are the views mentioned earlier, about getting what we have done and that there is no God who is responsible for our existence and there is no Messiah who will suffer for our sins or save us just by having faith in that person.

Our actions determine our own future and will result accordingly. We refuge in ourselves or in our good deeds, in the Buddha who taught us the way to free ourselves from suffering, in *Dhamma* or His teachings, and in *Samgha* or the order of Buddha, disciples who practise, explain and propagate the *Dhamma*. These are known as the three gems of Buddhism, *ti-ratana*.

The right view that regards alms giving to monks, feeding animals and people who are in need as good deeds and if done with benevolence can lead to beneficial results immediately or in future.

The right view that regards charity and generosity as wholesome; and if it is performed wholeheartedly, it'll yield good results. The right view that regards unwholesome actions can yield painful results immediately and in the future, while refraining from such evil actions and cultivating wholesome meritorious deeds subsequently bear happiness and fruitful results.

The right view that regards looking after one's parents brings good results, while neglecting and bad treatments produce bad results.

The right view that holds these facts - that there are living beings apart from humans and animals in this world and in extraterrestrial realms, and it is possible to achieve super natural power and knowledge to verify them; and that there is more than one god but none of them are

eternal. The right view is that holds faith in these four noble truths - the universal laws.

Right thought (sammā-sankappa)

Thoughts of renunciation, generosity, non-harming, loving- kindness and compassion extended to all beings are the right thoughts that should be cultivated. Thoughts that are associated with greed, hatred and ignorance must be avoided. This practice can be pursued by anyone, and is the basic step for both mental and physical purification.

Right speech (sammā-vācā)

It is restraining from false speech, tale bearing, harsh talk and useless chatter that is devoid of benefit. One needs to avoid speaking falsehood (***musāvādā***). There are four constituent factors of lying: (i) speech that does not accord with reality; (ii) an intention to deceive or fool other people; (iii) describing falsehood as truth; and (iv) acceptance of the statement as truth by the person who hears it. Making a statement that comprises of these four conditions is a kammically effective act of lying.

Right action (sammā-kammanta)

Right action aims at promoting moral, honourable and peaceful conduct, by restraining from killing or torturing creatures, from taking what is not given and from misconduct in sensual desires.

Right livelihood (sammā-ājiva)

It is the restraint from a livelihood based on wrong conduct involving: (a) the three unwholesome physical actions such as killing, stealing and sex trade; (b) four unwholesome speeches; and (c) from trading five kinds of merchandise that would affect the suffering of living creatures in some way such as weapons, intoxicants, poisons, human and animal trade, and meat. It is also the restraint from a livelihood based on improper means and on deception. All these bad livelihoods

are the hindrances for one to meditate and lay the foundation for the total liberation from suffering.

Right effort (sammā-vāyāma)

Right effort is the strenuous effort in connection with morality and mind development. There are four kinds of right effort: (a) the effort to avoid unwholesome tendencies that have not yet occurred; (b) the effort to overcome unwholesome tendencies that have arisen; (c) the effort to do good and wholesome actions not yet done; and (d) the effort to strengthen and bring to perfection the good and wholesome deeds that have already developed. This is a fundamental factor for Buddhist practice.

It can be classified into four components, comprising two efforts to avoid unwholesome actions, and another two to cultivate wholesome deeds. Thoughts of unwholesome actions which have already arisen but not yet done should be eliminated before being committed. Efforts should also be made to prevent these thoughts from coming back, since they can cause anxiety, corruption and debasement.

Thoughts of wholesome actions, which have already arisen and those potential thoughts which have not yet formed should be encouraged since they always bring peace, purity, nobility, progress and contentment.

Efforts should be made to purify one's moral conduct by keeping precepts, one's mind by meditation; to purify one's knowledge and vision of what is right and wrong, the right practice, and to obtain wisdom and enlightenment through practising the eightfold method.

Right effort should also be made to practise the eightfold path with the intention to prevent bad conduct from arising. In summary, the right effort of avoiding and overcoming unwholesome actions, and developing and maintaining wholesome deeds, are the precursors of the right practice and the right achievement.

Right mindfulness (sammā-sati)

Right mindfulness is the diligent attentiveness with regard to: (a) the activities of the body or all bodily behaviour or postures (*kāyānupassanāsati*); (b) the pleasant or unpleasant sensations or feelings (*vedanā-nupassanāsati*); (c) the activities of the mind or consciousness (*cittā-nupassanāsati*); and (d) the ideas, thoughts, conceptions and things (*dhammā-nupassanāsati*).

What is meditation?

Meditation is defined in the Oxford dictionary as thinking deeply and quietly. According to Buddhist sense, it is a training of one's mind to focus on an object at a length of time.

Why do we meditate?

We meditate neither to calm ourselves nor cure any disease, nor to obtain any supernormal powers of the mind (*abhinna*). These are just the peripheral results of meditation, which most of us may consider them to be the main reason for meditation.

The objective

The Buddhist objective of meditation is to develop awareness (*sati*) at all times. If one is aware of one's own actions and thoughts, one can judge if a deed is wholesome or not, and thus, giving the opportunity to correct it before doing an action.

Mind is the most difficult thing to control, as it is always changing and wandering. The more we try to control, the more we aware the dynamic changes and wanders of mind. There are four ways to steady the fluttering mind.

Four ways of obtaining the right mindfulness

The application of mindfulness to contemplate the physical body: It is also known as *kaya-nupassana* in *Pali*. We can concentrate our mind on any of 40 meditation objects known as *kammatthana* as described in the *Visuddhi-magga*.

There are a few exercises that involve the mind-ful observation on the unattractiveness of decomposing corpses, and on the 32 components of the body (these are general descriptions on the anatomy of a body in ancient terminology, which is used for observers of that period. It is by no means, meant to be a descriptive classification, and has a different objective).

It is considered that this practice does not need anyone to be a genius or a philosopher to master the technique, but requires a strong determination and will-power to observe the decomposed body, which could help develop insight to overcome passions and desires for the body, sex, and beauty.

The application of mindfulness to contemplate the pleasant and unpleasant feelings: It is known as *vedana-nupassana* in *Pali*. We can focus our mind on the feelings that have arisen in our body. These sensations, either pleasant or unpleasant, or neutral/indifferent will arise in the body at all times according to one's condition.

If the mind is repeatedly fixed to these sensations, we will notice the beginning and the end of each sensation as it happens and eventually the mind will become less restless. With successive mindfulness on these events, one will have more and more control on the mind and can easily concentrate on any object of meditation.

The application of mindfulness to contemplate the mind**:** It is called *citta-nupassana* in *Pali*. Our mind can be filled with different kinds of thoughts in a single day, and if we contemplate our mind on these, we can eliminate the unwholesome thoughts from our mental process. When this is practised often, the restlessness will disappear and the mind will become much easier to fix on any meditation object.

Venerable *Mogok Sayadaw* (famous Meditation Master in Myanmar) mentioned in one of his discourses that this method of mindfulness on thoughts can lead to attain *sotapanna*. He explained that, in our mental continuum, there will always be a thought which belongs to any of the 13 types listed: (a) six thoughts of external origin associated with the six senses; (b) five thoughts of an internal source associated with greediness (*lobha*), aversion (*dosa*), sloth and torpor (*thina-middha*) or stupor, a thought that is devoid of any of these, another thought that is against these defilements; and (c) two thoughts when the mind is focussing on the breathing process. If we contemplate the mind on any of these thoughts that arise in various circumstances, we can firmly bind the fluttering mind with the rope of right mindfulness. With analytical understanding, it will lead us to the right view.

***The application of mindfulness to contemplate mental objects*:** It is termed as *dhammanupassana* in *Pali*. It is the final observation of all the methods, where all will arrive to this contemplation at the end no matter which one has been opted to start with.[8] There are five mental objects to contemplate the mindfulness:

Contemplation on the five hindrances (pancanavarata): The five hindrances such as sensual desire, ill will, mental and physical sloth, distraction and worry, and sceptic, can prevent one from obtaining meditative or supernatural power (*jhana*), and the possibility of reaching *Brahma*'s realms. These can be eliminated by contemplating the thoughts regarding these hindrances as they occurred in one's mind by making efforts to prevent them before they occur, by identifying and eliminating them if they occurred.

Contemplation on the five aggregates (pancakkhandha): If we analyse ourselves, we will find that apart from the five aggregates of physical and mental characters: a physical body, sensations, perceptions, mental concomitants, and consciousness, we cannot find anything, any place in our body that will identify as our immortal soul.

If we contemplate the awareness on these five aggregates and try to notice the beginning and the end of each of the mental object, we will find that all the aggregates are instable, subjected to changes by the

physical laws with inevitable consequences, and will decay. Try to culture this awareness and develop it further until you can eliminate wrong views and delusions, defilements, cravings and attachments, conceit, and then become indifferent to life's upheavals.

Contemplation on the six senses (salayatana): One needs to analyse each sensation (matter or form, sound, smell, taste, tangible object and mental object) as it occurs and identify its cause, its course and its decay. Perform this repeatedly and try to understand it, if these sensations are your immortal soul or not, and then, proceed so that you can eliminate attachments and cravings for these sensations.

Contemplation on the seven qualities of insight: These are the seven factors of enlightenment (*sattabojjhanga*)**:** awareness, analytical quest, zealous practice (*viriya*), blissful satisfaction (*peti*), tranquillity and calmness (*passaddhi*), concentration (*samadhi*), and equanimity or indifference (*upekkha*). Try to analyse if these qualities exist in your mental continuum, and if not, attempt with unyielding zeal until you find the ways and means to cultivate and develop them.

Contemplation on the four Noble Truths**:** One has to understand and aware fully on the suffering; the origin of suffering; the cessation of suffering; and the course leading to the cessation. One has to make analytical understanding in every detail of the four Noble Truths and its practice.

These applications of mindfulness are the essence of the meditative work to get rid of one's mad and deranged, hot and burning mind, and gain insight.

Forty Meditation Objects

If one is interested to start practicing meditation, one may need to find out which of the forty meditation objects will suit best.

(a) The first 10 objects are ten kinds of devices (*kasina*), i.e., four primary colours (brown, yellow, red and white), four basic elements of nature (earth, water, fire and air), space (*akasa*)

and light (*aloka*), to focus one's mind. [Note: This is usually performed by those who practise *samatha* meditation.]

(b) The second 10 objects are ten kinds of observation on the unattractiveness of decaying corpses. [Note: They are usually practised by those who have strong desires for physical pleasures.]

(c) The third set of meditation objects are ten recollections, which include the quality of the Buddha, the *Dhamma*, the *Samgha*, the morality (*sila*), liberality/generosity (*caga*), the *Deva*, calmness, death, analytical and mindful observation on the 32 components of the body, and the mindful breathing or *Anapanassati*.

(d) Another set of objects are four kinds of observations of divine abidance, such as loving-kindness, compassion and rejoicing at others' success and prosperity, and equanimity. [Note: This is usually practised by both disciplines of *samatha* and *vipassana* meditation.]

(e) The next set of objects are four formless states, i.e., the spheres of unlimited space, consciousness, nothingness, and neither perceptible nor imperceptible.

(f) The last two objects are perception of the abominableness of food, and specification of the four basic elements of nature (earth, water, fire and air).

The details of these meditation objects can be found in *Magga Dipani* [9] and The Path of Purity[8].

Depending upon one's condition such as a weakness, a strongest desire or a drawback or talent, a suitable meditation object for each person should be chosen. Generally, it is often chosen for the exercise on mindful breathing, since it is easy and more appropriate to implement. Breathing is done continuously throughout life until the last breath, and therefore it is logical to choose this method since we can practise it until to the very end of life.

Meditation with mindful breathing (*Anapanassati*)

Meditation with mindful breathing as a part of the practice for insight meditation or *Vipassana,* as guided by many Meditation Masters including that of the late *Mogok Sayadaw* (Arahat), available at <*Nibbana.com*> web site, and have included a concise version in the Annex 6.

Here's a few tips on the basic principles of mindful-breathing for a beginner. It is necessary to choose a quiet and comfortable environment and to sit in any comfortable position, but you will find it most appropriate to sit with legs folded on each other. This will allow the observer to sit and meditate for extended periods without changing position and more easy to concentrate on the meditative object.

Firstly, please make yourself free from any physical or mental worries at least for a few minutes while meditating. Close your eyes and start breathing regularly in a normal way. Bring your attention on each and every breath and continue doing so for a couple of times. Then try to get your awareness to the touch of the incoming air on the nostrils and on the outgoing breath.

Continue doing so for a couple of minutes to focus your mind continuously on every touch of the incoming and outgoing air at get a concentration good enough to proceed with insight meditation.

If you have developed good concentration you must focus your mind on any of the six sensations (thoughts are regarded as the sixth sense in Buddhism) that develop on the body and try to note its beginning and the end to comprehend the three characteristics, namely, impermanence (*annica*), suffering (*dukkha*), and devoid of substantiality of ego-self delusion (*anatta*) instead of fixing your mind on one point (nostrils). This is known as *Vippassana* meditation, and the aim is to develop insight into the four noble Truths in principle.

It is usually difficult to develop concentration and don't get disappointed if you find yourself uncontrollable, and your mind wanders about after a few breaths.

This is normal for most beginners, and must try to meditate again and again until you can concentrate better. However, if you find it hard to keep your mind on this subtle touch of air on the nostrils, you may change your awareness either to the sound of your incoming and outgoing breath or to the movement of your tummy while breathing, which may not be literally called *anapanassati*.

These methods will usually improve your concentration, but if you still find it difficult to steady your mind, you may hold your breath for a moment and try to focus your attention. Then breathe in slowly and keep your mind on any of the subjects mentioned earlier, holding your breath in between each phase. You may count your breath up to 5-10 times in succession or may follow your breath to your tummy after touching the nostrils.

These methods usually help one to steady the mind unless one has got some worries or distractions. Try again and again at least for about 15 minutes a day for a week or so and if you still find it difficult to concentrate despite the absence of any distraction, you may need to change your meditation subject and will require consulting with an expert.

Regularity is very important in meditation. Be persistent and dedicate yourself to at least once or twice a day allowing about 15 minutes at a time. Try to increase the duration to half an hour and then one to two hours gradually. You may not be able to control your mind throughout the whole period, but with steadfast practice your will power can improve. You may experience tranquillity and calmness with meditation, which is the first result, but it is usually necessary to meditate for prolonged periods to obtain any further substantial results.

Chapter 5:
The Results

Results of Meditation

The Buddha explained that if a person pursued a method of meditation (mindful breathing), he/she would undergo four applications of mindfulness (contemplation of the body, feelings, thoughts, and mental objects); and if one practised these applications, that person would have seven qualities of insight (*bojjhanga*) (i.e., awareness, analytical quest, zealous practice, blissful satisfaction, tranquillity and calmness, mental concentration, and equanimity or indifference); and, if one had these qualities, that person would attain two achievements (insight and total liberation from suffering).

If meditation is practised regularly, one could obtain these results. First of all, one will become calm and more peaceful, will be able to think more clearly and the memory will improve. Meditation can also improve one's ailments if there is any. It can develop certain stages of mental attainments and supernatural power depending upon the path one has chosen. It can lead one to be reborn as a *Deva* or Brahma in the heavenly realms, and most of all, it can result in its highest achievement which is *Nibbana*, the ultimate liberation from suffering.

One will become aware of each breath, when mindful breathing (contemplation of the body) is practised and will develop the primary awareness or *Samadhi*. When one has fixed the mind steadfastly and intensely on the meditation object, the senses will become acute and one will start to notice or feel a variety of sensations (contemplation of feelings). The hearing can become sharper and may hear very soft sounds which are not noticed previously; the touch can become more sensitive and can perceive even a gentle and light stimulation on the skin; the part of the body that is touching any object can intensify and

may become numb or painful but it will soon disappear with successive concentration upon a meditative object.

One may start to feel as though the body becomes lighter and floating or may see some bright light or sparks despite closing the eyes. These are sensations of one's mind attained through improved concentration. If one has purified oneself by taking precepts and abstaining from unwholesome deeds, one can develop mental power with steadfast meditation of this type.

This is known as *samatha* meditation and one can develop four levels of *jhana* and will have supernatural power like premonition, telepathy, thought reading, clairvoyance, retrospection and many others in this very life and can reborn as a *Deva* or Brahma in the next life.

Those who exert themselves diligently in performing the virtues and perfections and practise meditation through calm and insight, this super knowledge can be attained in this life. They can see the beings in the four realms of deprivation in this world, can observe the six heavenly realms and even some of the Brahma's realms, but they could not perceive *Nibbana* with this super knowledge. They are collectively known as *abhinna* and with this power one can verify the presence of these beings.

The five super knowledge or *abhinna*

There are five super knowledge or the magical powers such as: (a) the ability to fly or walk on water, (b) the divine eye or clairvoyance, (c) the divine ear or clairaudience, (d) the ability to know the past lives or retrospection, and (e) the knowledge of *kamma* and its results on beings. These powers can be achieved through mindful meditation by any person including non-Buddhists. The sixth knowledge called the *sabbannutanana* which possesses an all knowing capacity can only be attained by those who have taken the eightfold path described by the Buddha.

The all knowing knowledge or omniscience *(sabbannutananna)*

The knowledge of all knowing capacity, including all previously mentioned five super knowledges, together with the implications of *kamma*, impermanence of all beings and its cause, the cessation of all suffering and the method, which are collectively known as the four Noble Truths, can only be attained by those who have followed the eightfold method.

Only with the *vipassana* meditation, one can develop the *magga-phala-nana*, the path and fruition knowledge, and only this knowledge together with all of the super powers described earlier could be rightly called omniscience, the all knowing knowledge (*sabbannutanana*).

Omniscience is possible only when the possessor averts the mind to the subject concerned but does not know everything instantaneously as it is impossible to have more than one thought occurring at the same time. Such persons can only be found in this world of humans, and nowhere else and by no other means.

What is the purpose of our existence on earth?

Earth, being a suitable place in the universe for the development of life forms would be the unique place to have diversity. All animals including mankind may have developed from unicellular organisms through evolution. We may all have same ancestors and a same carbon-based composition, but the development of the brain makes us superior to the rest. If we take advantage of this superiority and bully others, including members of our own species, we are making unwholesome deeds. If we consider for others and treat humanely, we are doing wholesome deeds. Therefore, we have a choice to be either evil or holy, which is a preparation for perfection just like the process of evolution. We have a choice either to go on being reborn for the satisfaction of sensual craving with all the suffering that rebirth brings in its train, or to extinguish the fires of passion and gain the supreme and unchanging state of *Nibbana*. [9]

Heavenly realms are too comfortable to realise suffering and the inhabitants live too long to perceive impermanence which is a basic requirement for the total liberation. Whereas, beings in the states of deprivation have so much suffering that it is impossible to practise the eightfold path. Only humans have lifespan short enough to realise impermanence and have a mixture of pleasure and pain to practise and realise the four universal truths.

A Buddha or the enlightened one can be found only in this human world since it is impossible to know and realise the four Noble Truths by oneself, without help of any kind, in any other realms of existence.

By self-purification, eliminating the worldly instincts of lust, ill will and delusion, man can make himself into a god, *visuddhi-deva* or a god by purification. The *arahat* while alive on this earth is a *visuddhi-deva*, enjoying the bliss and unbroken peace that only come when all the worldly attachments are severed. The attainment of this state is the purpose of ultimate reality for our existence in the universe. [9]

These are the results predicted, if one observes the four universal laws of truth or the theories described by the greatest philosopher and the teacher – the Buddha. The results are definite and can be verified by any individual, despite the difference in race and religion.

However, the results obtained may vary from one person to another, since these are physical laws and are therefore subjected to the laws of physics. The uncertainty principle of Heisenberg and quantum mechanics can still influence the results. There is an unavoidable element of unpredictability or randomness of the results.

One cannot tell with certainty whether one will attain *Nibbnna* in this existence or not, since *parami* or perfections do play a part in determining who will achieve this goal (Annex 2). However, if one practises with diligence and determination *Nibbana* is guaranteed within the next seven lives in the future. One who has attained this stage is known as a *sotapanna* or a stream-winner.

Right Collections

With steadfast and regular meditation one may develop the will power and acquire the primary mental concentration known as the *Samatha jhana* or *Samadhi*. From this point two schools of thought emerge, one will lead to the four subsequent *jhana* or mental concentrations that can acquire the super knowledge in this life and will reborn as a Brahma in the next life. This method is known as *samatha* meditation.

The other is *vipassana* meditation which will lead to seven qualities (*Bojjhanga*) and two achievements, which can be obtained through four levels of collections or *bhavana*. The primary achievement is *sotapanna* or a guarantee for a rebirth in realms of happiness and the final being the total liberation or *Nibbana*.

The primary stages of *samatha* meditation can be obtained with relative easiness if one puts enough effort and zeal and concentrate on only one object, but to obtain supernatural power is much harder. It may require the same amount of effort as for obtaining *vipassana* insight, which can perceive *Nibbana,* but with right practice. Although there is a possibility to convert into *vipassana* meditation at any stage, one could not readily opt for total liberation when the super natural power is obtained for they are highly addictive.

If one chooses the *vipassana* meditation, it is necessary to concentrate on whatever object that develops in the mind, instead of focussing the attention only on one particular object. When one opts for this method, concentrate on any sensation (contemplation on feelings), any thought (contemplation on thoughts) that has developed during meditation instead of focussing the awareness on breathing only. Then, try to note the beginning and the end of each object.

If this is done repeatedly with due enthusiasm, one will be aware of every moment and will begin to realise the impermanence of every object and subsequently on everything, including the belief in immortal soul. It will be realised that every pleasure is just a temporary sensation that will inevitably cease. Every object that one possesses will decay including the body and what is believed as the soul, and nothing could be taken into the next life, but only the deeds that were done during the

life time. It will be realised that one takes a rebirth after dying, which is the effect of wrong views, attachments and volitional actions. The analytical quest and understanding of the cause and effect, the differentiation of ultimate reality from its literal or apparent value on every subject should be endeavoured.

If one has realised by direct experience in the innermost mind that there is no such thing as eternal soul but just the effect of the past causes which has resulted in a new life, then one has eliminated *atta-ditthi*, the false belief in self existence or soul. Blissful satisfaction will result from this right understanding and right thinking. The two constituents of the wisdom group of the eightfold path have been established and the person has freed completely from the misery of being reborn in the four states of deprivation. From that instant one has reached and is established in the first stage of the full extinction of defilement (Annex 3).

However, such person will still have cravings for sensual pleasures (*tanha*), and conceit (*mana*), which make him or her to take delight in the sensuous realms of human and heavenly being, not to an extent to commit heavy volitional actions. The person will also become more efficient in taking the precepts. This condition is known as *sotapanna* or the stream-winner and will attain the ultimate perfection within the next seven lives. [(9)]

When the two constituents of the wisdom group of the eightfold path have been established by right thinking and meditating deeply on arising and vanishing of meditative-objects, this realisation must be continued throughout one's life in order that upward development may be achieved successively. It is of utmost importance not to stop meditation at any stage, even if one considers having achieved the immediate objective. One must be persistent and strenuous in practising meditation to achieve the four levels of purity as much as possible.

Purification of mind through Vipassana meditation

(a) *Cittavisuddhi-bhavana* or the purity of the mind obtained when one practises meditation and develops awareness, and becomes aware of every action, differentiates right actions from the wrong ones, and put effort for further physical and mental purifications.

(b) *Parikamma-bhavana* or the preparatory work on the development of upper stages. It is the effort and understanding of a would-be *sotapanna*.

(c) *Upacara-bhavana* or the proximate-development, where one has put enough effort and is almost ready for *Nibbana*, has eliminated defilements (*tanha*), but some elements of conceit (*mana)* may still exist while in this state.

(d) *Appana-bhavana* or the access-development, where one will be totally free from *tanha* and *mana* and can perceive *Nibbana* at that instant.

A mediator who has fulfilled *sila* - the five precepts to cleanse the body and *Samadhi* - the primary concentration or awareness that person will undergo cleansing of the mind treading the 16 levels of *panna* or insight (see Annex 4), if practised steadfastly and correctly, using awareness and equanimity as the guide.

These are the immediate results of *vipassana* meditation and the observer can experience the qualities of *Nibbana* at the very instant when one is in the *appana-bhavana*. Once a person has experienced these qualities, he or she will never exchange these for any other pleasures in this world or in any of the heavenly realms. These qualities could not be satisfactorily explained in the positive terms of human or *Deva* sensations as they are beyond these perceptions. It is not a mere self-annihilation but the completion of one's greatest task. The conception of *Nibbana* as self-annihilation would be more appreciated only when one has eliminated *atta-ditthi*. [9]

One could judge oneself on the result of meditation by these parameters regarding the right view, and the degree of defilements or

kilesa, since one could not lie or pretend oneself, at least deep in the heart. One should not be contented if told to have achieved a certain goal by someone since that person might not be in a position to judge one's inner thoughts. Only by practical observation, one can verify these laws or the theory of everything, which the Lord Buddha, a great teacher and the greatest scientist had discovered more than 2500 years ago. His teachings were well documented and were handed down for generations in the form of recitations, and then at a later date, they were verified at Buddhist Conferences and put into verbal and written records of *Pali* texts known as *tipitaka*, the three baskets or three great volumes.

One can rightly be called as a Buddhist only when the meditation methods as prescribed by the Lord Buddha are practised, for it is not a religion as many people imagine, but an absolutely gentle and noble practice which everyone can pursue despite any difference in social and any other background.

Lord Buddha or Buddhism does not forbid one from learning and discovering other religions. One does not worship the Buddha as a saviour who would take all the sins of humans, save us from hell and would take any person who has faith in him to Heaven or to *Nibbana*. The Buddhists regard the Buddha as a Great teacher, who discovered the Four Noble Truths, and who taught people how to liberate ourselves from suffering.

Chapter 6:

The Review

Final Review

In Buddhist philosophy all beings of the 31 realms of existence are made up of either *rupa,* a physical body or *nama*, a consciousness or mind, or in a combination of *rupa and nama* as in the beings of sensual realms (Table 1). The physical body is perceptible when constructed with organic matter particles, as in the case of humans and animals, and not perceptive to human senses if constructed with non organic particles. It denies the existence of an eternal soul or ego that reincarnates into new physical bodies after dying. This is one of the three characteristics that we are trying to understand to know the ultimate truth.

There are two types of truths or realities, the conditional truth (*pannatti*) and the ultimate truth (*paramatta*). Science only knows the conditional truth, but the Buddha knows both, the ultimate truth as well as the conditional truth. The Buddha encourages us to know the ultimate truth and also to respect the conditional truth. In ultimate reality there are only four categories; the mind (*citta*), mental concomitants (*cetasikas*), matter (*rupa*) and *Nibbana*. Out of these four categories, the first three are unstable and exposed to corruption, but *Nibbana* is stable and uncorrupted. Every living thing is made up of the first three categories.

The four basic elements or building blocks of matter

It was mentioned 2500 years ago in a term of that era that a physical body and all matter forms are composed of four basic elements (*mahabhuta*) or the building blocks of quantum physics compounded

into smallest subatomic particles (*kalapa*) electrons, protons and neutrons.

(1) *Pathavi dhatu*, which literally means earth or **the element of extension**, which has a mass. It has two characters: hardness or strong form, and softness or weak form, which can interchange conditionally. This element may be synonymous with the particles of half-spin of the modern era that make up the mass (proton and neutron) of an atom.

(2) *Apo*, which literally means water or **the element of cohesion and liquidity** in ultimate reality. In its strong form, matter has a property of liquidity and when weak it has cohesion, which may be interpreted as strong and weak magnetic forces between the matter particles.

(3) *Tejo* literally meaning heat or fire, or **the element of heat and cold.** The strong form has heat while the weak form has cold but they are reversible. It may be synonymous with the particles of integer spin that constitute strong and weak nuclear forces.

(4) *Vayo* literally meaning air or as **the element of support and motion**. In the weak form it has a supportive character whereas in the strong form it has motion. It may also be synonymous with the integer spin particles.

These four basic elements were taken on their face values and have been wrongly expressed by many scholars including Aristotle in 322 BC as earth, water, fire and air instead of taking their values of ultimate reality. These elements are conditioned by *udaya* (literally = weather) meaning appearance and *vaya* meaning disappearance, or a compound of these two, *udayabbaya*. These factors influence the four basic elements to take either its strong or weak form.

A physical body is an aggregate of matter, which consists of the four basic elements and the mind is the cognitive end result of the brain. According to the Buddhist philosophy, there is no eternal soul in us, but only mind and matter. Matter in our body can be influenced by *kamma*

or volitional actions, nourishment, weather and the mind. Mental concomitants and consciousness on the other hand, are influenced by thoughts and sensations associated with five sense organs and external stimuli.

In the new existence we possess a body and a mind which are neither totally new nor exactly the same, but the reflection of our past. The illusion that regards us to possess an eternal soul, defilements, attachments and obsessions, volitional actions, and mental concomitants with their inevitable consequences are the five causes for rebirth (Figure 1).

In ultimate reality, every living thing, including heavenly beings, is composed of mind and matter, which can be elaborated as the five aggregates: a physical body, sensations, perceptions, mental concomitants, and consciousness. We brand these aggregates as persons and give names accordingly in order to communicate. This is known as the apparent reality or face value.

In ultimate reality, a body made of matter or of any other basic elementary elements is unstable, and mind which, depends upon the interaction of external stimuli with six senses of the physical body is even changing more rapidly than the body.

Both mind and matter is degenerating within a split second but replaced with new formations instantly. The changes are so rapid that we do not notice them apparently. A fast flowing river is often given as an example for these changes since water in the river does not seem to have changes when viewed from a distance.

When one dies the body decays, but the mental continuity will remain due to the result of the five causes for rebirth; and will reborn immediately as a new reflection of the past body and mind. One could be reborn in any of the 31 realms, some of which lies in this world and others in the heavenly extraterrestrial realms. The placement of a rebirth is considered by one's own mental continuum known as *kamma*. There is no super human being judging our actions and motives but they are simply following the laws of nature.

The existence of Gods, their disciples and the prophets are accepted since they have appropriate places in the 26 heavenly realms. There is not only one God but several gods who have great life spans that could last thousands of world systems and have witnessed the formation and destruction of many worlds. This may have made them consider themselves as the creators of the universe. However, all of them have either a body or mind, or in combination, which is instable.

The longevity of beings depends partly on the merits shared by humans in their wholesome deeds, as they are often remembered during those activities. This might be one of the reasons why the god conception was created since they needed more followers to share their merits. They do, however, may look after their followers to some extent, but humans do not entirely depend upon their blessings and they could not bless each and every follower. Every being depends upon their past and present *kamma*, the wholesome and unwholesome actions, which will take effect as appropriately. One has to reap what one has sown and one has to rely upon oneself for salvation.

However, disbelief in God as a creator and as a saviour does not necessarily mean that one need not have any religion. Every religion has certain rules to follow, especially chastity, charity, humanity and compassion, which are wholesome actions that will give good results immediately and in the future.

If one does not believe in any religion, he or she is prone to commit evil since one could easily succumb to the temptations and passions of the sensual pleasures. Nevertheless, it is equally important to know which actions are classified as unwholesome since there are some conflicting advices given by some religions, especially on issues like killing and taking revenge. One should be aware that killing one's parents by any means, even if it was to be associated with an act of mercy will inevitably lead the killer to hell if committed actively. There is no way of forgiving by any God, no matter how much one can repent afterwards. These delicate issues should be considered carefully since it can be committed unknowingly.

The Buddha has described this theory of everything through the all-knowing knowledge that was achieved by the proper method of meditation. He has shown the method for the total liberation from all forms of suffering and impermanence. It emphasizes on the non-existence of the personality view, which is the primary cause of greed, meanness and ill will.

The Buddha has mentioned that the universe has no beginning and has no end, and that one who sought after this question will never have time to practise *vipassana* meditation, which can give the answer when one attains the enlightenment. He has stated that matter could be extirpated by wisdom and only in the absence of matter one could expect eternal tranquillity and permanence.

Everything in this world and in the whole universe can be classified as according to apparent values. We classify things that we can perceive with our six senses on their apparent values. Science is the systematic classification of things and their phenomena in the apparent reality, whilst, Buddhism examines the inner world and classifies these in the ultimate sense.

In the ultimate reality, only a physical body, mind and mental concomitants/formations which are all unstable, and *Nibbana,* the only stable and unchanging reality exists. There are no persons and beings, which we are regarding on their apparent values, exist in the world of ultimate reality.

What is *Nibbana*?

Nibbana is a perfect state where there is no soul or body to decay and no sensual pleasures. There is no definite place for *Nibbana* in the universe and therefore it may be classified as nothingness in the sense of apparent values. However, in the sense of ultimate reality, it is the only eternal happiness and peace which can be perceived by those who have exterminated every source of defilement.

If a person has overcome through direct experience, the ignorance in the concept of the unchanging entity or soul/self and realized *Nibbana*

in both its apparent and ultimate terms, and yet willing to undergo self-extinction, then, this person has achieved the first stage of enlightenment or *sotapanna*. This parameter may be used to do self-assessment. However, the milestones that one needs to tread while practising *vipassana* meditation is given in (Annex 6).

According to U Chan Htoon's explanation [11], *Nibbana* can be experienced, but it cannot be described for the simple reason that there are no words or concepts that can derive from our experience of life in the sphere of relativity to apply it.

Nevertheless, the Buddha used certain terms to convey some idea on what *Nibbana* means, by calling it in different qualitative terms, such as *asankhata* - unconditioned; *para* - the other shore (beyond *Samsara*); *ajara* - the ageless; *amata* - the deathless; *dhuva* - the permanent; *thana* - the refuge; and *lena* - the shelter.

It is sufficient to know *Nibbana* by these qualities, because there is *Samsara* which is impermanent, subject to suffering and void of reality. There must be something which is permanent, free from suffering and real in the ultimate sense. It is that reality which we mean by *Nibbana*. It is not as some people imagine as a totally negative concept.

It is beyond both negative and positive, for negative and positive are opposite poles of a relativity-complex and neither is absolute, because each depends upon the other for its existence. The cosmos exists by virtue of such opposites, and hence it must always have good and evil mixed, each of them being relative to the view point of the illusory Self. *Nibbana* being a freedom from self-delusion is also free from the opposites created by man's egocentric viewpoint.

If matter was absent in Nibbana and there is no continuity of self, what then, reaches Nibbana at the death of Arahats?

This question has been pondering in the mind of the author for sometime, while practising mediation until an insight appeared out of the blue. Previously, I could not help but thought there must be something, if

not an eternal soul, to perceive the final *Nibbana* when Arahats and Buddhas released the last breath of life.

However, I realised later on that the Arahats and Buddhas all practised meditation and went into *phala-samapatti*, the attainment of fruition prior to death. They never died suddenly without consciousness, but always have time to go into *phala-samapatti* before the last breath, even if they became unconscious morbidly. The last thought or *Cuti-citta* (for the convenience sake) is already in *Nibbana* at the death of the physical body and the mind, and do not require anything to perceive *Nibbana*.

To give a simple analogy to this context, it would be like someone who has been very peaceful and satisfied prior to loosing consciousness when a general anaesthetic is given, from which the person would never recover. *Nibbana* can be perceived prior to death by *Arahats* and *Ariyas* (noble and enlightened persons) as well as when they died.

It does not require the mind or even consciousness to perceive it. It is one of the four ultimate realities (mind, mental concomitants, physic, and *Nibbana*) that we are trying to understand. It may not be completely described in conventional terms, for there is no mundane experience that is similar to the experience of *Nibbana*. It is said that Arahats only knew the affirmative qualities of *Nibbana* when coming out of it and reviewed the experience (*paccavekkhana-nanaa*), and that they do not know anything when in *magga-phala nanaa*.

Should we aim for Nibbana if it has an element of annihilation?

It may seem rather unattractive to a lay person to annihilate self which has been so attached and accustomed to us and aim for *Nibbana*, whereas, it is comforting to regard our souls as immortal and heaven as the last abode as in most religions, since there is no morbid suffering and we could still enjoy sensual pleasures.

However, we should aware that one still has to die in the heavens and normally, there is no guarantee for anyone to be reborn only in the realms of good destinations. There are sensual pleasures in the

heavens, which are the potential temptations of unwholesome deeds that can cause rebirth in the states of deprivation.

Therefore, we are better off if we aim for *Nibbana* in this very life, which could ensure us for wholesome rebirths in the next life and could take an eternity, in conditional terms, even if we reached the stage of a stream-winner for the final liberation. The longest duration for a stream-winner could be long enough to encounter a few Buddhas before the person enters the final stage of *Nibbana*.

Conclusion

It is of utmost importance to learn and understand the Four Noble Truths, while the Teachings of the Buddha still exist, and we are still alive and well. It is very difficult to be reborn as a human, and it would be a waste of precious time if we do not try to understand these Truths.

If one does not belief in life-after-death and enjoyed all the earthly pleasures, which might involve doing unwholesome actions, what would happen if there is life after death?

Is it worth spending a miserable life in one of the states of deprivation just for a fleeting pleasure in this life? On the other hand, if one does belief in life after death and did wholesome actions; will that person loose substantially if there is no life after death?

One ought to consider these questions deeply before giving away oneself to the temptations. One can be easily reborn or resurrected in the heavens if one has led a good life, but it is not the last abode as one has considered being. One may still end up in the four states of deprivation after dying in the heavens as there are sensual pleasures, which can cause unwholesomeness.

If we are aware, the agony of death and suffering can easily be learnt from our nearest state of deprivation, the animal kingdom. Documentaries on wild life often shown in the media clearly

demonstrate the survival of the fittest, where the fitter predates on less able prey without mercy.

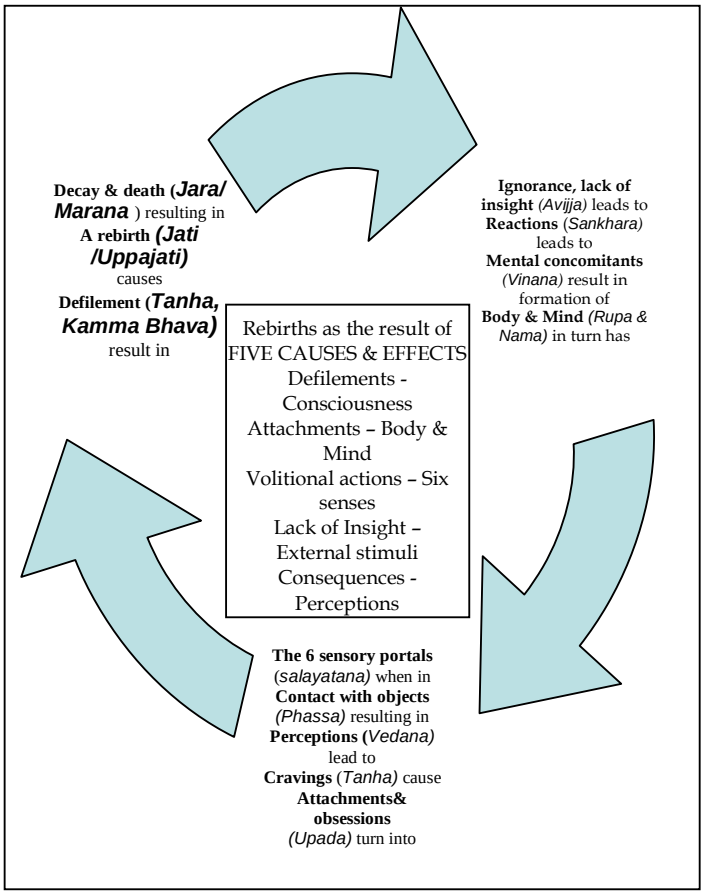
If one does not want to reborn as an animal where death and danger is always prevailing, or in even much worse states of deprivation of the *Samsara*, the only assurance that one can have is to do insight meditation and aim for *sotapanna,* which could guarantee for the seven good destinations in the future. It is of utmost importance for everyone to strive while there is a chance, for this mental achievement, the *sotapatti-magga* and become a stream-winner.

May all readers be able to realise the need to strive for this achievement and pave the way to the total liberation.

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The cycle of causes and effects, the law of dependant arising

(An Abstract from the Ven. Mogok Sayadaw's *piticcasamuppada*)


Decay & death (Jara/ Marana) resulting in A rebirth (Jati /Uppajati) causes Defilement (Tanha, Kamma Bhava) result in
Ignorance, lack of insight (Avijja) leads to Reactions (Sankhara) leads to Mental concomitants (Vinana) result in formation of Body & Mind (Rupa & Nama) in turn has
Rebirths as the result of FIVE CAUSES & EFFECTS
Defilements - Consciousness
Attachments – Body & Mind
Volitional actions – Six senses
Lack of Insight – External stimuli
Consequences - Perceptions
The 6 sensory portals (salayatana) when in Contact with objects (Phassa) resulting in Perceptions (Vedana) lead to Cravings (Tanha) cause Attachments& obsessions (Upada) turn into

Note. Thoughts are regarded as the sixth sense in Buddhist

Annex 1 – Meritorious Deeds

Three ways of obtaining merits

There are three ways of getting merits: (a) generosity and charity or *dana*, (b) observing the precepts or *sila,* and (c) meditation *or bhavana*, and these will determine the quality of the next life.

Precepts (sila) or ethical conducts for gaining merits

(1) Abstaining from intentional killing or torturing any living creature that can suffer.

(2) Abstaining from any form of intentional stealing.

(3) Abstaining from misconduct in sensual desires, including adultery and other unethical sexual relations, and alcohol and substance abuse.

(4) Abstaining from any form of false speech and a deceptive action that may harm others.

(5) Abstaining from slandering, backbiting or setting one person against another to create hatred.

(6) Abstaining from using rude, vulgar, hash or abusive talk.

(7) Abstaining from talking frivolously (small talk, trifling or silly talks) that would waste time when it should be spent wisely on meditation.

(8) Abstain from covetousness.

(9) Abstaining from ill will.

(10) Abstaining from wrong views.

The meditation (bhavana,)

(a) Loving kindness, benevolence or *metta*.
(b) Compassion or *karuna*.
(c) Rejoicing at others success and prosperity *or mudita*.
(d) Detachment, indifference or *upekkha*.

Five heavy volitional actions for a certain rebirth in hell

1. Matricide or killing one's mother
2. Patricide or killing one's father
3. Killing a saint or Arahat
4. Causing physical harm to Lord Buddha during his lifetime
5. Creating schism or split within the Buddhist Order

Annex–3 Three basic levels of mental collections acquired through meditation to become a *Sotapanna*

(1) *Namarupa-pariccheda-nana:* Insight into the five aggregates of mind and matter, and into the non existence of immortal soul;

(2) *Paccaya-pariggaha-nana*: Insight into the cause and effect of mind and matter; into the knowledge that matter is conditioned by past and present deeds, thoughts and inspirations, laws of nature, and nourishment; and that mind is influenced by interactions of external stimuli with the six senses; and,

(3) *Sammasana nana* Insight into the impermanence of mind and matter.

The ten *Kilesa* or impurities / defilements

A *Sotapanna* has eliminated wrong views and sceptical doubts, and reduced the following defilements to an extent that after dying, the person will take only 7 rebirths in the realms of happiness at the most.

(1) Greed, *loba*; (2) Hatred, *dosa;* (3) Delusion, *moha;* (4) Conceit, *mana;*

(5) Wrong views, *micchaditthi*; regarding a belief in the immortal soul or disbelief in life after death; (6) Sceptical doubt, *vicikiccha*; (7) Sloth, *thina*; (8) Excitement, *uddhacca*; (9) Shamelessness, *ahirika;* and, (1) Recklessness of blame, *annottappa;* These ten *Kilesa* can be condensed into **the four A*sava* or defilements:**

(1) Enjoyment in sensual pleasures, *kammasava;*
(2) Desire for existence, *bhavasava;*
(3) Speculation or heresy, *ditthasava;* and,
(4) Ignorance or lack of insight, *avijjasava*.

These are the causes for rebirths in *Samsara* and can be grouped into five causal factors for existence

Causal factors for rebirths

(a) Ignorance or lack of insight, *avijja;*
(b) Inevitable consequences or reactions and mental concomitants/formations, *sankhara;*
(c) Cravings or defilements, *tanha*;
(d) Attachments or obsessions, *upadana;* and,
(e) Volitional actions, *kamma-bhava*.

Enlightenment and abolition of all causal factors for rebirths are the criteria to be free from all forms of suffering in the *samsara,* the cycle of existence. *Arahats* and Buddhas have reached this state of enlightenment and are no longer in the *samsara*.

Annex (3) –Mile stones in *vipassana* insight meditation [13]

(1) *Namarupa-pariccheda-nana:* Insight into the five aggregates of mind and matter, and into the non existence of immortal soul.
(2) *Paccaya-pariggaha-nana:* Insight into the cause and effect of mind and matter; into the knowledge that matter is conditioned by past and present deeds, thoughts and inspirations, laws of nature, and nourishment; and that mind is influenced by interactions of external stimuli with the six senses.
(3) *Sammasana-nana* Insight into the impermanence of mind and matter by close observation and analysis.
(4) *Udayabbaya-nana*: Insight into formations and dissolutions of mind and matter by direct experience and realization. Changes occur in matter of our body 50^{10} times / sec. and 10^{12} times / sec. for mind.
(5) *Bhanga-nana:* Insight into formations and dissolutions of mind and matter in much rapid succession that only dissolutions are experienced.
(6) *Bhaya-nana:* Insight into the impermanence of mind and matter in all future existences in the *Samsara*, and experienced fear for these existences.
(7) *Adanava-nana:* Insight into the negative aspects of mind and matter and felt dispise for these existences.
(8) *Nibbida-nanaa:* Insight into boredom for possessing mind and body.
(9) *Muncitukamyata-nanaa:* Insight into desire for complete liberation from *Samsara* and suffering.
(10) *Patisankha-nana*. Insight into impermanence of mind and matter became so strong that *vipassana* meditation is practised with unyielding effort for total liberation.
(11) *Sankharupekkha/Sankhara+upekkha-nana:* Insight into imperma-nence of mind and matter in continuous manner, and become equanimous on all pleasures and sufferings.
(12) *Anuloma-nana:* The feeling that *Nibbana* is in sight and look forward to it.
(13) *Gotrabhu-nana:* A fleeting thought that *Nibbana* is in progress and contemplate further on the meditative object.
(14) *Magga-nana:* A fleeting thought and experience of *Nibbana,* as achieved in *sotapatti-magga,* which ceased immediately afterwards.
(15) *Phala:* Perception of *Nibbana* in full extent; *manda panna* is the experience of *Nibbana* for two times; *tikkha* is for three times according to the degree of insight.
(16) *Paccavekkhata nana:* Experience of *Nibbana* in full extent repeatedly, and the knowledge that total freedom from *kilesa* or impurities and defilements has been obtained.

A *sotapanna* has developed the first 14 insights and has experienced *Nibbana* for a single time. The person will keep the 5 precepts or *sila* for the lifetime, but will still have sensual desires although very much lessened; has doubt & false views.

Annex (4)–Ten *upekkilesa* or hindrances for progress in *vipassana* insight meditation [13]

1. *Obhasa*.Taking pleasures or enjoying in streams of light obtained when a person is in trance with *Samadhi*.
2. Enjoyment in five kinds of satisfactions or rapture*, peti*. *Khuddaka-peti*, enjoyment in the sensations obtained when insight into the four basic elements or *kalapa* becomes vivid and started experiencing one of the *Samadhi* experiences: vibrations and waves of subtle and gross sensations, goose flesh, fleeting sensations of happiness and tears of joy, etc. *Khanika*-peti*,* enjoyment in the above sensations repeatedly, which become more pronounced and more widespread. *Okkantika-peti*, enjoyment in waves of gross sensations experienced through increased concentration or *Samadhi*. *Ubbega-peti*, enjoyment in more intense satisfactions than the former, such as in floting sensations, crying, laughing, bodily movements and gestures. *Pharana-peti*, enjoyment in tranquillity and calmness.
3. *Citta-passaddhi*, enjoyment in mental and physical alertness obtained through intense concentration for hours on end.
4. *Adhimokkka/ Saddha*, enjoyment or over confidence in the progress, hence equanimity is lost.
5. *Paggaha/ Viriya*, over exertion in earnest for progress; hence equanimity is lost.
6. *Sukha*, enjoyment in both physical and mental satisfactions obtained through meditation, hence equanimity is lost.
7. *Nana / buddhi*, vividness of the objects of meditation and hence, one becomes conceited.
8. *Upatthana/ Sati,* the progress is so good that one becomes conceited.
9. *Upekkha*, the observance of the impermanence of mind and matter in a middle way in-between strenuous and less effort, instead of observing in a euonymus manner.
10. *Nikanti*, enjoyment and attachment on the above satisfactions which prevent one from realizing *dukkha* or impermanence.

Annex 5–Mogok Sayadaw's Way To The Vipassana Practice

Concise edition (Nibbana.com): Translated by Dr Tin Htut

The following dialogue between the venerable *Mogok Sayadaw U Vimala* (M) and *U Kyaw Thein* (KT), the author of the *Mogok Sayadaw's* biography and the method is a glimpse on the practice at the ***Mogok*** *Vipassana* Centre. It was given on a day in September 1956 (1318 Myanmar era) at the *Mingalar* Monastery in Amarapura, Myanmar (Burma).

Introduction

Sayadaw (M): Have you come to practice meditation?

U Kyaw Thein (KT): Yes Sire, I have come to practice meditation.

M: All right, does your family give you the permission?

KT: They gave me the permission Sire.

M: Why do you come to meditate, is it that I have only asked you?

KT: I want to be free of the suffering in *Samsara*, my lord.

M: Have you developed faith (*Saddha*) in your mind as well?

KT: I have the faith Sire.

M: If that's the case you must decide in your mind that you have the rarest opportunities for being a human who is born in the Buddha*'s Sasana*, and to have the chance to practice *Vipassana* that I am going to give you. You must also develop faith in you mind that it will help you to escape from the *Samsara* sufferings of old age, ailments, death, and other misfortunes and make up your mind to follow the instructions meticulously.

KT: Yes my Lord.

M: Maung Kyaw Thein, you must also decide not to think of your business and your family. Try to be detached from these by using wisdom.

KT: Yes Sire, I will renounce them.

Adipadhi, The three principles to follow

M: You must rely on the three main principles (*Adhipati*).

KT: All right, but what are these three principles Sire?

M: Yes, I will tell you. Firstly, you must remember that you need to rely on yourself; that you practice meditation not for your livelihood, but to release from the suffering of old age, disease, death, misfortunes and inconveniences. This is the *Attadhipati* (self-reliance principle).

KT: Yes Sire.

M: Secondly, you must regard life as your next principle (*Lokadhipati)*. You must not pretend to meditate and think of all your life affairs. Don't be lazy, apathetic, asleep and don't let your mind roam. Don't do anything that is not proper for the guardian angel, good *Devas* and those who have *Abhinna* (super natural powers) know. So you must be shameful of yourself if you are not leading a good life.

KT: Yes Sire.

M: Thirdly, you must regard Dhamma as the third principle (*Dhammadhipati)*. You must pay respect to the Dhamma and try to experience insight wisdom (*Vipassana nana)* directly. You must know that if you were not enlightened it was not that there was no Dhamma, but it was your fault that you did not pay due respect to the Dhamma principle. You must decide to have faith in this principle and strife with all your might.

KT: Yes Sire. If I take these as the main principles and meditate shall I be awakened in this very life, my Lord?

M: Have you committed the *Pancanantariya-kamma* (five cardinal sins)? Have you killed an Arahat?

KT: No Sire.

M: Have you killed your mother or your father?

KT: No Sire.

M: Have you ever caused a split among the Samgha?

KT: No I haven't Sire.

M: All right, I won't ask you whether you have caused any physical harm to the Buddha as it is not relevant now. If you have not committed any of these sins just try your best in the practice. It will take only seven years if a person is very dull, seven months for an average and seven days for very bright persons with the right practice. It won't happen without practice. You must work hard with faith, mindfulness, concentration, energy, and wisdom (*Saddha, Sati, Samadhi, Viriya and Panna*).

KT: Yes my Lord, I will work hard and follow your instructions.

Eight precepts (physical cleansing)

M: All right then. You take the eight precepts. After taking the eight precepts (refrain from killing, stealing, practicing celibacy, refraining from telling lies, taking intoxicants, taking solid food after mid-day, and refraining from sensual indulgences such as perfume, cosmetics, music & dancing, and handling money & financial matters)

Five Rituals

M: Now you need to do the five rituals (*Pubbakicca*) during meditation. Devote yourself to the Buddha both, physically as well as mentally. Ask for pardon, if you have done any wrong to parents and holy people either physically, verbally or with your mind. Propagate loving kindness towards all sentient beings including your guardian angel and those who watch over your property, your city and the *Sasana*. Make a wish *(Adhitthana)* for all the merits that you have gained during this life and in previous lives to result in enlightenment. Try to realize the nature of dying (*Marananussati*) by

thinking that you have died in your uncountable past existences and that you will have to die some day. Try to realize and persuade yourself that you must work hard before death arrives and thereby develop the effort and energy to meditate. Do you understand?

KT: Yes Sire.

Essential Theory in brief

M: Do you know how to differentiate between matter (*Rupa*) and mind (*Nama)*?

KT: I have only the theoretical knowledge, Sire.

M: All right, I'll tell you. When you consider vision you have the eye and the object, which are *Rupa* and the image that developed in your mind is the *Nama*. Likewise, all six sense organs and their objects are *Rupas* and the sensations developed by their interactions are *Namas* (Eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and thoughts).

KT: Yes Sire.

M: You must recognize and differentiate between *Nama* and *Rupa* in the present sensation that develops. This is called ©*ataparitta*. You must recognize and realize the impermanence, suffering and impersonal qualities (*Anissa*, *Dukkha* and *Anatta*) of the present sensation. This is called *Tarataparitta.* You must realize that the present sensation is neither your body, nor your mind and try to avoid clinging (*Tanha*) and self conceit (*Mana*) and delusion or wrong view of regarding consciousness as your soul (*Ditthi*). This is called *Pahanaparitta*.

KT: Yes my Lord.

M: You must differentiate between mind and matter. Then do not go after the *Jhana* way (for attaining super natural powers). If a Yogi wants to overcome live and death and become awakened he needs concentration of the mind just enough to develop *Samadhi*. Then he must practice *Vipassana*.

KT: Yes Sire.

Introduction to Anapana

M: You must do the contemplation of breathing (*Anapana*) first. It is mindfulness of the incoming and outgoing breath. You must breathe in normally and fully. Do not force it or reduce it, but breathe in and out normally and regularly.

KT: Yes Sire.

M: You can focus your mind on the lips at the tip of nostrils or at the sternum, but it is better to keep it at the tips of nostrils (to be sharper in developing concentration). Whatever site you have chosen to contemplate you must try to be mindful continuously.

KT: Yes Sire.

M: *Anapananussati* is the mindfulness that occurs when contemplated on the incoming and outgoing breaths. A Yogi practicing *Anapananussati* fixes the mind strongly on the breathing while taking breaths regularly and normally. He first focuses the mind on the tip of nostrils and watches as the air goes in and out.

KT: Yes Sire.

M: Apart from this mindfulness on the touch of air he must not divert his attention to any other object.

KT: Yes Sire.

M: A Yogi who has developed concentration after practicing *Anapana* must know that the person is not "you, I, male or female," but a collection of *Rupa* (matter) and *Nama* (mind) and a collection of the five aggregates. Then the Yogi must realize that the mind that registers this knowledge is the *Nama*. This *Nama* dwells in the heart. The physic that is in sitting meditation is the *Rupa*. You will come to know this reality by direct experience.

Continuation of essential theory

(1) The Five Aggregates: After this differentiation of *rupa* and *nama* you must understand that the collection of twenty-four physical objects is the *Rupakkhanda*. The consciousness that knows is the *Vittanakkhanda*. Feelings that associate with the mind when contemplated on sensations are the aggregate of *Vedana kkhanda*. Recognition of the sensations that associate with the mind is the aggregate of *Sannakkhanda*. The other fifty concomitants of the mind, which include all volitional perceptions except consciousness and recognition, are known as the aggregate of *Sankharakkhanda*.

(2) Dependant Origination: I will need to explain further using the *Paticca-samuppada* to differentiate cause and effect relationships, as you may not understand thoroughly.

KT: Yes Sire, it's getting clearer by your explanations.

M: That's right. It is better to let a Yogi know the basics before giving the practical aspects.

KT: Yes Sire.

M: After you know the five aggregates you must also understand roughly that the past *Avijja-tanha* (ignorance and attachments) are the causes *of rupa-nama*.

(The cycle of dependant origination in brief is: from ignorance/attachment arises reaction, *Sankhara*; reaction causes rebirth of mind and matter, *nama & rupa;* with mind and matter develops the six sense doors, *Salayatana; Phassa*, stimuli to these six sense doors provoke six sensations, *Vedana;* attachment develops on these sensations, *tanha;* it further develops into obsessions, *Upadana;* leading to striving and physical actions to achieve them, *Kamma*-bhava; subsequently resulting in rebirth, aging and death, *Jati, Jara and Marana*; and the cycle goes on and on.)

KT: Yes my Lord.

Formal Request for a Meditation Method

M: Now you repeat what I said to request for the meditation method. "*Kammatthanam me, bhante, detha Samsara-vatta-dukkhato mocanatthaya"* [*Bhante* (Venerable), please give me with compassion, the right method of meditation in order to be free of the *Samsara* suffering.] Repeat this three times. Now go and practice for an hour on what I have just taught you.

Establishment of Samadhi

M: Maung Kyaw Thein, did you practice as I told you?

KT: Yes I did. I have kept my mind at the sternum, Sire.

M: Did it stay where it was kept then?

KT: No Sire, it didn't at the beginning, but it stayed there later on.

M: When *Anapana* is practiced for an hour and have obtained *Samadhi,* it was not possible if you did not have perseverance. That is *Viriya* (effort) and with this effort you have managed to sit for an hour. This is called *Samma-vayama*, the right effort. Did your mind notice the movement of air at the sternum while you were breathing?

KT: Yes Sire, I did.

M: Right, you noticed the movement of air, as you were mindful. This is called *Samma sati*, the right mindfulness.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: When you were practicing *anapana* did your mind wander to your home? Where did it go?

KT: No Sire, it didn't go anywhere. It stayed at the sternum where it was kept.

M: Right, that was *Samma-samadhi*, the right concentration. Your mind has stayed where it was kept.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: All right, you have developed *Samadhi.* However, you need to develop it further by breathing through the nose, but not through the mouth. When you are breathing do not try to know if you are breathing with your right or left nostril, but try to keep the mind at the touch of the air to your nostrils to develop *Samadhi.* You don't need to follow other *Samatha* methods. If you breathe through the nose you must know that it is through the nose and if you take a deep breath you must know that you are doing so.

KT: Very well, Sire.

M: You have been instructed to keep your mind to the sternum at first. Now you must watch as the air touches the nostrils, sternum and umbilicus while you breathe in and vice versa as it goes out.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: You must notice the outgoing and incoming air as if through the bellows and as a string of a lathe-file rubs the stick you must continuously watch the air at the place where it touches.

You must notice when you breathe faster, and must know when it is slow.

You must be aware when you breath is long/deep and also knows when it is short/shallow.

However, you don't need to watch the breath in a continuous stream. Just watch at the point of contact as if a saw cuts through the timber, but not along the edge of the saw. You must focus your mind at the point of contact of the air with the nostrils.

KT: I will, Sire.

M: If you practice in this way and be mindful you can develop *Samadhi* within 15 minutes when you become accustomed to it.

KT: Yes Sire.

Reflection On Physical & Mental Phenomenon

M: You need to know that it is the *rupa* (matter) that was doing the breathing and it is the *nama* (consciousness) that knew what you were doing. When you can differentiate between *nama and rupa, Nama-rupa-pariccheda-nana,* the analytical knowledge of mind and matter develops. Cleansing of views is also involved simultaneously, which is known as *Ditthi-visuddhi*. Remember this carefully.

KT: Yes Sire.

M: When you meditate you must know the followings.

(1) You need to know that there are two components of the mind. Mental factors (*Cetisaka*) and consciousness (*Citta*).

(2) The mental factor (thought) must be in line with the consciousness when you contemplate.

(3) Do not let the mental factor go astray from the consciousness.

(4) Do not think of anything while meditating. Don't let any thoughts come into the mind. If you can master your mind you can eliminate defilement (*Kilesa*). If you don't you will neither be successful in your life nor can you eradicate the 1500 *Kilesas*.

KT: Yes Sire.

M: I will give you an example how to master your mind. Suppose a herd tender wanted to tame a raw bull he needs to put a post firmly into the ground, insert a rein into the bull's nose, and tie it to the post and tame her. Likewise, you must tame your mind by fixing it to the cord of mindfulness (Sati) and tie it up to the post of the object of contemplation in your practice. Do you understand?

KT: Yes Sire.

M: I'll give you another example. If you want to catch a lizard that went into a burrow that had six holes, you need to close five holes and wait at the sixth. The analogy to this procedure would be to

close all the five sense doors, namely your ears, eyes, nose, body, your tongue and then to wait at the last door, which is your mind. You will surely catch the thought as it occurs, just like you catch the lizard. Is that clear?

KT: Very well, Sire.

M: All right, you keep them aside for a while. You go back and continue your practice to develop the concentration further.

To Overcome Sleepiness

M: How was your *Samadhi*?

KT: I could manage to get it Sire, but barely.

M: Why was that?

KT: I must admit that I felt sleepy, Sire.

M: Shame on you. That was due to excess in your determination. You must have persisted to meditate in your sitting posture. You should have changed it and did walking meditation instead, if you felt sleepy.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: It is all right to change the posture for beginners. As you become more experienced you may not need to change the posture when you feel sleepy.

KT: How can I do it, Sire? I don't know how to evade sleepiness without changing posture.

M: When you become sleepy how was your breathing? Was it quicker or slower?

KT: It was slow and shallow, Sire.

M: Right, the breathing will be slower and you feel sleepy. Then what about your *Sati* at that time?

KT: It was poor, Sire. I was not mindful at that time.

M: "*So,satova assasati, satova passasati*." As mentioned in the *Mahasatipatthana Sutta* a Yogi who practices *anapana* must breathe in and out with mindfulness. But, you have lost mindfulness and you must never let it go.

KT: I must admit I lost mindfulness, Sire.

M: You must breathe in fully and then breathe out fully. (You must notice as soon as the breathing becomes slower and correct it by breathing fully again. If you do not notice as soon as the breathing gets slower you may go into torpor and soon become sleepy) You must never let the mindfulness escape. If you breathe fully in this way for ten to fifteen minutes you can become alert again.

KT: Yes Sir, now I understand.

M: Sometimes when greed or desire carries you away, you say you do not have the time to become tired, don't you?

KT: Yes I do, Sire.

M: That is you have followed your desires instead of your mind.

KT: Yes, sire.

M: When you meditate *anapana* you must relax your body and your muscles. Only then you can breathe regularly and correctly. The Buddha said "*Passambhayam Kayasankharam*." That is you must breathe neither slowly nor quickly, and neither shallow nor deep, but regularly.

KT: Yes Sire, I will follow your instructions, but what shall I pay more attention?

Balance Between Sati And Other Attributes

M: You remember this very carefully. It is only *Sati* (concentration) that is never in excess. *Saddha, Samadhi, Viriya, Panna* (faith, concentration, effort and knowledge) must be developed simultaneously and equally (neither too little nor too much). If you could not develop them simultaneously and equally they would not

be well balanced and either *Uddhacca* (distraction) or *Thina-middha* (torpor or sloth) would result. At present, you have been instructed to meditate just to develop *Samadhi.* Don't let it mix with anything else!

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: You continue with the meditation after you have your breakfast. Only then you will develop the *Samadhi*. When you meditate let faith, knowledge, concentration and effort be well balanced as I have told you earlier. I am taking my time to explain it in detail, as you are a beginner. What's so difficult about practicing *anapana*. Go and practice till your *Samadhi* is strong and then come back.

M: How are you doing Maung Kyaw Thein? Have you developed good *Samadhi*?

KT: Yes my Lord, I have developed a strong *Samadhi* now.

M: What position have you taken to meditate?

KT: Sire, I have done sitting meditation at the first hour and then did the walking meditation for the rest of the time.

M: Have you developed a strong *Samadhi* now?

KT: Yes, sire.

M: Right, you now have the *Samadhi*, but you must remember that *Samadhi* is like a column of mercury in a thermometer. It can go up and down according to the condition. When you are in meditation it is good. However, if you encounter with crude sensuality it can go down again.

KT: Yes Sire, but I have a strong S*amadhi* now.

Changing Over To Vipassana

M: Switching over to *Vipassana* is just like a locomotive changing the rails from one to another. The contemplation of the mind is moved from *Samatha*, one pointed observation, to the arising and

dissolving phenomenon of the current *nama-rupa* (sensation). You must remember that this is led by the mind.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: All right, it's enough. You can change over to *Vipassana*. First you must try to develop good *Samadhi* and then go to *Vipassana*.

KT: Yes Sire.

M: You are asked to do Samadhi not to encourage you to practice *Samatha*. You must let go of the mindful breathing as soon as the mind is calm and then contemplate on any sensation that develops without any breach. If you contemplate more and more on sensations you will come to a point where you can overcome them. You will no longer register them as sensations, but only as arising or dissolving phenomenon. You will realize that all sensations including pleasant ones, unpleasant ones and neutral ones dissipate and come to an end.

Arising and dissipation of sensations

M: When you contemplate on sensations *vedana* will appear, but when you watch them with analytical knowledge you will come to know that they are impermanent (*Anicca*). If this wisdom is developed it can be regarded as the overcoming of *vedana* (sensual perception). If you couldn't comprehend the impermanence of sensual perceptions you haven't overcome *vedana* as yet. When a Yogi has surpassed *vedana* or has eliminated them the Yogi will feel light, agile and fresh even after the formal meditation. That is why one needs to try hard to overcome v*edana*. Mindfulness of breathing in *Samatha* is just to make the mind calm, but it cannot lead to Nibbana. You must remember this very well.

KT: Yes my Lord.

M: *Vipassana* is to keep the mind on the wisdom path and watch and realize the phenomenon of mind and matter as they are. The

physical body that we have at present is continuously forming and decaying from cradle to coffin. It must be comprehended that impermanence (*Anicca*), suffering (*Dukkha*) and impersonal characteristics (*Anatta*) are the only realities that can be found.

KT: Yes Sire.

Development of insight wisdom

M: When *rupa* and *nama* are comprehended as *Aniccha*, *Dukkha* and *Anatta* repeatedly, and the arising and dissolving phenomenon are perceived it is known to have reached the *Udayabbaya-nana*. You remember? Do you understand?

KT: Yes my Lord.

M: You need to know these facts clearly. If they are not clarified beforehand using acquired knowledge your progress will not be substantial. So I will have to go further to remove *Ditthi* (false views) and *Vicikiccha* (doubts). Maung Kyaw Thein, if you want to be a *Sotapanna* (stream winner) what should you remove first?

KT: Yes Sire, I need to remove *Ditthi* and *Vicikiccha* first.

M: Right, where do false views and doubts lie?

KT: I have no idea, Sire.

M: *Ditthi* and *Vicikiccha* are attached with the five aggregates of mind and matter.

KT: Yes Sire, now I know.

M: Now you know that they are attached to the five aggregates. If you do not know where these five aggregates come from and how they are arising and dissolving, you could not remove false views and doubts by any means.

KT: All right, my Lord.

Reflection on five aggregates and dependant origination

M: You may have the book knowledge or have acquired from teachers that the five aggregates are *Rupakkhanda, vedana kkhanda, Sannakkhanda, Sankharakkhanda* and *Vinannakkhanda*, but if you do not know the causes and reasons for their becoming and disintegration false views would adhere to you despite the acquired knowledge. That is why you need to know *Paticcasamuppada*, the cycle of dependant arising first if you want to have insight into the five aggregates. So, I will teach you the *Paticcasamuppada*. What you have learnt about dependant arising in the past was only an acquired knowledge."

KT: I have only the book knowledge, Sire.

M: If you do not know *Paticcasamuppada* there is no way you can know the aggregates. If you do not know the aggregates, false views will adhere. That's why you need to comprehend *Paticcasamuppada.* Book knowledge is not enough.

KT: Yes Sire, I will try to understand it.

M: Do you still remember it by heart?

KT: Yes I do, Sire.

M: In that case I won't elaborate on it. You must remember that there are two forms of dependant arising. What you know from the book about *Paticcasamuppada* is one thing and there is also another *Paticcasamuppada* that is arising and dissolving in the body. You must understand the *Paticcasamuppada* of the body in order to make progress. Do you follow me?

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: That's why I am going to show you the causes and reasons for arising and dissolving of the five aggregates. Do you know that your volitional responses (*Sankhara*) of the past existence, which were carried out without wisdom (*Avijja*) have resulted in the body that you have it now?"

KT: Yes Sire.

M: Those were in the past and therefore they were out of your control. They were past *Paticcasamuppada* and did not concern you. Again the future *Paticcasamuppada* has not arrived yet and so it does not concern you. The most important thing is to understand the present *Paticcasamupadda*. Is that clear?

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: Which *Samuppada* concerns you?

KT: The present one, my Lord.

M: What about the past?

KT: It doesn't concern us, Sire.

M: And the future?

KT: No, Sire. (To reflect on the present *Paticcasamuppada*, one has to watch a stimulus as it develops into a sensation when coming into contact with the sense door, and follows it as it changes into attachment or aversion, and then as it dissipates)

M: Where do false views and doubts attach?

KT: To the five aggregates, Sire.

M: Right, they are attached to the five aggregates. If I ask you whose hair is this, you will answer that it is your hair. The false view attaches to *rupakkhanda*, the hair. If I say that the tea is very nice, it attaches to *vedana kkhanda*, the feeling or taste. If I say that this sentence is written by me, I note down this line, then the false view attaches to *sannakkhanda*, the interpretation of a feeling. When I say that my weaving is exceptionally good, then the false view attaches to *sankharakkhanda*, the reaction to a feeling. And if I say, "Don't you dare try me," then the false view attaches to the *vittanakkhanda*, the consciousness or self esteem. They are the places of attachment, do you follow me?

KT: Yes sire.

M: Then you must detach the false views and doubts from the aggregates. Theoretically, if *rupa* and *nama* can be differentiated they say that false views are detached. However, there is one more thing to understand.

Only when you understand the cause of *Paticcasamuppada* and the effect of *Paticcasamuppada* you will detach yourself from false views and doubts. If you know the cause of aggregates you can eliminate the false views. If you don't, the false views will stay. If you know that the effect (of anything that happens in you) is due to the causes of aggregates, then you can eliminate the false views totally.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: If you understand that there are only causes and effects, but no persons and beings (non-personalized view) you can eliminate the false views.

KT: Very well, Sire.

M: What you need to work on is the present *Paticcasamuppada*. It doesn't mean the whole day, but what you see or hear at the present moment. It is important to watch the present moment when you meditate now. Don't recall the past and don't look forward to the future, but watch what is happening at present. By the way, how old are you now?

KT: Forty, Sire.

Cleansing of false views

M: Right, even if you are forty, you may consider that you have the same appearance as you were in your younger age. Then, it is *Sassata-ditthi*, the unchanging perverted view.

KT: Yes, Sire

M: If you consider that you can risk your life for money, that you do not care about your life as you think that there is nothing after

dying (dying is better than suffering). Then, it is *Uccheda-ditthi*, the annihilation view. You must not consider like this as well. Do you understand?

KT: Yes, my Lord.

M: You must cleanse yourself of these two false views (*Sassata-ditthi* and *Uccheda-ditthi*) first before you meditate.

KT: Yes, I'll do it, Sire.

M: If you know the disintegration phenomena of mind and matter you cleanse the *Sassata-ditthi*, and if you know the arising phenomena you cleanse the *Uccheda-ditthi*.

KT: I've cleansed them, Sire.

M: Right, it is only with the book knowledge. Is that clear? Don't attach yourself to mind and matter as "You and me."

KT: Very well, Sire. I will no longer get attached.

M: Then it is enough. Go to a quiet place and start the meditation. You practice S*amatha* only to get a good Samadhi (concentration). Sit straight, know the incoming and outgoing breaths, the Samadhi will become good, then you must not lax the effort at that time. Let the awareness (*Sati*) and knowledge (*Panna*) go together, the physical body will start showing changes and you will notice sensations (*Vedana*). Try to overcome the feeling that arises, if you watch your mind focus on the thoughts. If a sound is heard while watching thoughts you must notice that it is heard.

KT: Very well, Sire. I will watch and register whatever comes along.

M: Right, after you've registered it you must consider that your mind is your consciousness. Then contemplate on the incoming and outgoing breaths with your consciousness and consider that those are the two hosts of consciousness. If you hear a sound while watching it is the hearing consciousness, if you smell anything with your nose it is the smelling consciousness. Likewise you register your taste consciousness with your tongue and seeing

consciousness with your eyes. If you feel a pleasant sensation on your body it is the pleasant consciousness, if it is unpleasant it is the unpleasant consciousness.

Six sensations /thoughts and cittanupassana

M: **"***Dukkha-sahagata kayavittanam, sukha-sahagata kayavinnanam*" as the literature goes, there will be an unpleasant feeling on the body sometimes and a pleasant feeling on the body at another.

There are altogether six consciousnesses (related to five senses and thoughts) on the body. You note it down.

KT: Yes, sire.

M: Are these six thoughts always occurring in the mind?

KT: No, Sire.

M: They occur occasionally, so they must be regarded as "External Visiting Consciousnesses."

KT: Right, Sire.

M: When one thought occurs the other five thoughts do not arise. If a mosquito bites you while watching (your two hosts) breathing consciousness, an itching or an unpleasant consciousness may follow, then watch that itching consciousness.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: How many external visiting thoughts altogether?

KT: Six, Sire.

M: Right, are these thoughts always there?

KT: No, Sire.

M: Next, there are five "Internal Visiting Thoughts" that associate with consciousness.

They are thoughts of *Loba* (greediness), *Dosa* (anger), *Moha* (delusion), *Aloba* (absence of grasping), and *Adosa* (absence of

aversion). *Amoha* is not included here as it is the consciousness that must watch other thoughts. Therefore, the five internal visitors and six external visitors, altogether eleven visiting thoughts must be watched whatever that arises in the consciousness. When one thought occurs the other five do not arise. Just watch the existing thought that occurs.

KT: Yes Sire.

M: Right, if none of these thoughts occur go back to the consciousness of breathing in and out, and watch it continuously.

They are the two host-consciousnesses, remember?

KT: Yes I do, Sire.

M: While meditating you must follow the example of a spider. Spiders make webs and wait in the middle to catch any insect that is caught in the web. They go after whatever insect that is caught in the web, devour it and return to the middle. As a spider waits in the middle when there is no insect, you must also do the same and watch your breath when there is no thought.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: When you contemplate on consciousness a thought that tells you to start meditating will arise first. Watch that first thought and you will notice that it arises and falls subsequently. It will disappear as soon as you sit down to meditate (if you are fully aware).

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: Try to see it with your mind. When you contemplate on it you will know that it has disappeared. This sort of knowing of the actual phenomena (what's happening) is called *Yathabhuta-nana*.

KT: Yes Sire.

M: If there is no thought arising, you watch the incoming and outgoing breaths alternately. You need to watch this very carefully. If you can follow this quickly you will progress, but if you are less aware of it your progress will be slow. If there is a *Kilesa* (defilement) in-

between the two breathing consciousness you won't progress. Try to prevent the *Kilesa* intervention. If there is no object of meditation and you stop watching, *Avijja* can come in. You must be aware of this fact (the need for continuous watching). Do you understand? Now go and meditate.

KT: Very well, Sire.

Side effects of samadhi

M: Did you get good *Samadhi*?

KT: Yes my Lord, and I also saw the Divine light.

M: Oh no, you don't have to bother these. When Samadhi is good you can experience all *Pannatta-nimitta* (conditioned signs such as light, halo, smoke, rapture etc.) as well as *Paramattha-nimitta* (unconditioned signs). You do not have to follow these (as they can retard the progress).

KT: Yes Sire.

Posture

M: Did you experience *vedana* as well?

KT: Yes I did, Sire.

M: How did you experience?

KT: When I sat for a long period my legs became painful, Sire.

M: Did you follow that?

KT: Yes I did, Sire.

M: You have created yourself pain unnecessarily. You need to know the right posture for sitting meditation.

KT: Yes Sire, I do not know how to sit properly.

M: Sit in a cross-legged position, put your spine straight, don't lean to either the front or to the side. Don't let your head bend either.

When your body above the spine moves back and forth or sideways, the spinal column doesn't stay in alignment and you will feel pain often. If that was the case you couldn't get Samadhi, let alone to overcome *vedana*. The lower part of the body should also not to be under severe pressure. Don't' let the legs press each other (semi-lotus position). If you let the legs pressed, they will become numb and painful as the vessels are occluded. If you do not sit in the proper position you create pain unnecessarily. Do you understand? These facts are important for beginners like you.

The Sayadaw let the Yogis meditate in whatever posture they prefer, but he recommended sitting posture as it could give concentration easily. For those who haven't started the practice yet they should consider their health in choosing the posture.

Breathing

M: The incoming and outgoing breaths must be regular. If they are too harsh or too rapid it will be like a self-torture. When you inhale your breath air and heat (*Tejo*) enters the lungs through the pharynx, larynx, trachea, right and left bronchus. It then reaches the air sacs through very small tubes and the *Tejo* (energy) is transferred to the various parts of the body. So, you must sit straight to let the lungs expand. Only when the air sacs are filled with air you can sit for hours. If you cannot fill or empty the lungs fully you can become breathless and tired. This is important for those who meditate.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: When you take a breath the heart beats four times. You breathe approximately sixteen to eighteen times per minute, then the heart beats from sixty four to seventy two times. If you breathe rapidly just imagine how much the heart has to beat. You may get ailments instead of the Dhamma.

KT: Yes, Sire, we are sure to get disorders instead.

M: A Yogi meditates in order to attain Nibbana that is free of all sufferings. It is not possible to acquire the objective by an extreme practice such as self-mortification. The Buddha had admitted that he did not obtain *Magga* and *Phala-nana* when he practised *Dukkaracariya* (self-mortification). That's why you need to strive moderately following the Middle Path (*Majjima-patipada*), in-between the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification).

KT: Yes, Sire, I will strive moderately.

M: For you to know now, *hadaya-rupa*, the place where mind stays (it may be regarded as the soul by some) is in a fistful (Taletkhuk) of blood in the heart chamber. This *hadaya-rupa* is the place where the *Mana* and *Vinana* (consciousness), and *Citta* and *Cetasika* (mind and mental factors) reside. Our body has to follow the orders of *Mana Vinana* and *Citta* (mind and consciousness).

KT: Yes Sire.

M: That is why it's not me or you, or any body else. The Buddha said "A *sariyan guhasaran*" (*Asararam guhasayam, Dh.P.6)* and *"missu visaw guhasayaw" (maccupaso guhasayo, A-iv.97) in the Dhammapada*, *Satta-nipata-Pali* scriptures. This is called Sada tuvibinga contemplation.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: The Buddha said, "Dear *Samgha*, mind and consciousness has no mass, but lies in the chamber of the heart. Agitation and anger lies in the heart chamber and it is like the messenger of death."

KT: Yes, my Lord.

M: With the influence of mind and mental factors a fistful of blood inside the heart's chamber takes different shades and colours. If *Raga* (passion) occurs the blood takes the colour of bright red like that of mercuric oxide. If *Dosa* (anger) prevails it turns darker. And if *Moha* (delusion) is present it is watery and insipid, just like washing from a chunk of beef, reddish and watery.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: If there is a worry and the mind is restless (*Vitakka*) the blood becomes cloudy and turbid like that of the water of boiled beans. If there is *Sadha* (faith) it turns into pale yellow and whitish. When (wisdom) prevails it changes from pure white to clear and has a reflective shine like that of *jotisara* and *manijota* rubies (best quality rubies).

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: That is why you must keep the neck straight when meditating. If it is bent either sideways or forward and backward for a long period, torpor, sloth and faints can develop.

I have to warn the Yogis quite often on this aspect. If sloth or torpor develops when the head is bent in this way it is not a part of the Dhamma phenomena, but a result of wrong posture.

I am telling you these details as you're a beginner. It's enough for today. Now go and meditate.

Reflection on six elements

M: Yesterday, I have told you about the physical body and about the posture while meditating. Today, I will tell you about how to contemplate on the six basic elements and how to analyze and experience them in reality. It is called *Sadatu vibinga kammathana* in *Pali*. Now listen carefully.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: The six elements are "*Pathivi abosa, tejosa vayokasa vinanidan, nesawhasami netanme, evam tatha virijjati. Evam virattam khemattan, sabba sanyaw janatigan, Anwesam sabba thanrsu, marasaynapi nijagati*."

"*Pathava apo ca, tejo ca -- (nesohamasmi netam me, evam tattha virajjati. "Evam virattam khemattam, sabbasamyo-janatigam; anvesam sabbatthanesu, marasenapi najjhaga" (S.i.114)*

Pathava or the element of earth (mass/matter/solidity) has two forms. The outer *Bahiddha* and the inner *Ajjhatta*.

KT: Yes, Sire.

32 Components of the body

M: The outer form of the element of *Pathava* (matter) is the visible form of objects such as earth, forests, mountains, tree, monastery, house and buildings etc.

The inner form of *Pathava* is the matter that makes up living beings. There are twenty components of *Pathava* in our body. They are (1) hairs, (2) cilia or fine hairs, (3) nails, (4) teeth, (5) thick and thin skin, (6) muscles, (7) vessels, (8) bones, (9) bone marrow, (10) tendons, (11) heart, (12) liver, (13) membranes, (14) connective tissues, (15) lungs, (16) large intestines, (17) small intestines, (18) new food, (19) old food or excreta, and (20) brain. The two inner elements of *Pathava* that are not included in the list are kidneys and testis. The *Pathava* elements have different shapes and forms, and are distinctive from one another. Initially you just remember them as such.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: You can contemplate them in this way. Imagine in your mind that you have placed your hairs and nails in one hand and some dust from a cemetery in the other hand. Compare these two forms of *Pathava* elements and consider that neither of them are I, nor mine, but just the element of matter and basically they are the same.

KT: Yes my Lord.

M: For example, if you dispose off your hairs and nails, which are the inner forms of *Pathava* element, they will become outer forms of the same element. They will be the same as the dust from a cemetery. If someone digs, cuts, clears and burns the outgrowth and weed from the cemetery of your ancestors, you cannot

consider that the person is digging, cutting or burning your ancestors though their flesh and bones would have returned to dust by then. You cannot tell that it is your ancestor although it's the same element of matter as the dust.

KT: I cannot tell Sire, it must be the same element of earth.

M: The next element is *apo* (liquidity), which has a watery nature. It is also described in general as the outer *Bahiddha* and the inner *ajjhatta*. The outer form of water can be seen in oceans, lakes, streams, puddles, rain etc. Any source of composed fluid that has a nature to flow is the outer form of *apo*.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: The inner form of *apo* can be seen in any liquid substance of humans and animals. They can be enumerated as (1) bile, (2) phlegm or sputum, (3) pus, (4) blood, (5) sweat, (6) fat, (7) tears, (8) lipids or lymph, (9) saliva, (10) nasal discharge, (11) secretions, and (12) urine. Any body fluid that has a tendency to flow is classified as inner form of *apo*. They are altogether twelve in number, but milk and seminal fluid can also be added in the inner water category. (The 20 inner forms of *Pathava* together with these 12 inner forms of *apo* can be contemplated to notice their instability, unsubstantial, and devoid of personification or self; a meditation suitable to those who are overindulgent in sex and beauty.)

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: Any liquid that is excreted by animals and humans will change into outer form of water, don't they?

KT: They do, Sire.

M: Then you imagine that you have a cup of water from those outer sources and a cup of urine that you've excreted. If you study these two forms of water, do you regard any of those as you or your water? Don't they have the same qualities of liquid, to cohere and to flow in general?

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: *Tejo* is the heat energy or fire element, which has the outer and inner forms. The outer form of heat *Bahiddha* can be seen as destructive fires, heat of the molten lava inside the earth, fire for cooking, and fire that ignites from heat. Frozen polar regions, ice capped mountains and forests are other extreme forms of heat. Temperature in both forms of heat and cold is regarded in general as the outer form of heat element.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: The inner form of heat element *Ajjhatta* is seen in animals and humans as *Usma fire, Pacaka fire, Santappana fire, Dahana fire*, and *Jarana fire*.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: These five inner elements of heat or cold can be elaborated as follows. The body temperature is the *Usma* fire. This is the absolute heat that can be found in all parts of our body including skin and tissues below the skin (it may be regarded as metabolism). If this heat is extinguished the creature dies.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: *Pacaka* is the fire that digests all foods in the alimentary tract starting from pharynx to anus (it may refer to acid in the stomach and digestive juices.) It is most active in the stomach and upper intestines. If this fire exhausts the person dies.

KT: Yes, my Lord.

M: *Santappana* is the extreme form of body heat often associates with infantile and adult disorders (metabolic disorders, hyperthyroidism etc.), gynaecological disorders (urinary tract infections) fever, and inflammatory conditions. Heat due to prolonged pressure on limbs while sitting meditation, heat generated by rubbing the palms, burns and heat stroke, the heat in stressful conditions and in anxiety, is included.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: *Dahana* is the stronger form of heat than *Santappana*. It is found in extreme conditions like hyper and hypo-thermia, which often lead to death.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: *Jarana* is the heat that causes ageing and it is separate from the other four forms of heat.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: If you compare the outer forms of heat with the inner forms you will find that they are neither yourself nor your property, but only heat and its characters. They are generally the same and you should contemplate to realize this point.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: *Vayo* is the element of air (expansion and movement). It has two forms as well, the outer form and the inner form of air. The outer air is the wind and hurricanes, air form the bellows used in alchemy etc. Any air blows and moves things, and causes a pressure.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: The inner air is the form of air that occurs in breathing, air that regurgitates from stomach, air that moves in the intestines and purges from the anus, air in the chest and abdomen, and air in the blood circulation. These inner forms of air have the same qualities of movement and expansion.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: I won't go into detail for the first four forms of inner air, as you already know them. I will tell you briefly how the last two forms of inner air cause ailments and problems.

KT: Please, Sire.

M: When the air in the chest and abdomen goes wrong they escape into the cavity. They tear the membranes that separate them and can cause death. It is called a dagger air. When the air in the circulation goes wrong it can block the vessels in the eye, ear, jaws, neck, body and limbs resulting in paralysis. This air will definitely cause trouble (it is called air blade).

M: You place your hand in front of your nostrils and feel the air as you breathe in and out. Then imagine the air that comes out from the bellows. You will notice that both air have the same quality of movement and pressure.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: You must know that the air that comes out of your nose is not you and it is not yours either.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: To tell you how to contemplate on this *Kammatthana*, you imagine a tree that has moving branches due to wind, as your body. The whole tree is the element of earth (matter). This earth element cannot move on its own, cannot change from one place to another. The earth element of the branches moves with the wind. Likewise, your body is also the element of earth. Your limbs and your body parts, which are elements of earth move due to the movement of air inside.

I will give you evidence. During the time of the Buddha there was a monk by the name of *Nagasamala Thera*. When he went for alms round into a city he saw a beautiful dancer at the crossroads. She was dancing in full swing moving her belly, chest, and hips, charming the crowd who were watching her performance. The monk remarked, “Well she is beautiful, dances well and that’s why the crowd of *Andha-puthujjana* (foolish people, blind worldlings) get attached to her charm.” Then he looked into the realities and considered that the beauty was not the lady, but only *rupa* and *nama*, the five aggregates. That dancing and moving of the parts were also the movements of the inner air, earth and water

elements. *Ingamanganusara*, the inner air element movement that caused the eyes, eyelids, chin, arms and legs to move. It was the same as movement of the branches of a tree when the wind blew. It was the same as *Bahiddha*, outer air movement that moved the branches. He then developed the factor of mindfulness (*Sati-sambojjhanga*) and turned to the body with the penetrative insight (*Dhamma-vicaya-sambojjhanga*). While the *Thera* was at alms round he attained *Arahatship* with this meditation.

KT: Very well said, my Lord.

M: A person who does not understand the elementary nature and the arising and dissolving phenomenon, like yourself will enjoy the dancer's performance. That's why I am explaining the six elements and the five aggregates to you. Is that clear? These are very important.

KT: Yes, Sire, I come to understand now.

M: Right, I must continue with *akasa*, the element of space. It has also the outer and inner forms. Any space in between the layers of earth, above the earth, and at the surface is the outer element of space.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: The inner element of space is any cavity in the body that does not touch with other elements, for instance, aural canal, nasal cavity, oral cavity etc. (it also includes sub atomic space between proton/neutron and electrons).

If you see a cave or a hole in the tree trunk you can compare them with the cavities inside your body and must realize that they are essentially the same. You must know how to view generally and avoid personal attachment.

KT: Yes, Sire, I know how to view now.

M: I will give you another example. I will show you how to analyze the five elements from a pot of boiling stew. You follow me carefully.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: The chunks of meat and vegetables in the pot are the elements of earth (*Pathava*). All the liquid in the pot is the element of water (*Vayo*). If you dip your finger into the stew it will burn. That is the element of heat (*Tejo*). The vapour rushing out from the pot is the element of air (*apo*). You must remember that the area of the pot above the stew is the element of space (*akasa*).

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: Right, if you touch a chunk from the pot you'll burn your fingers. What that burns is not the chunk and the chunk is not the heat. The chunk is the element of earth (matter), and the heat is the element of fire (energy). Energy has no mass. If you touch a flame and try to grasp it, you'll know. If you dip your finger into the liquid it'll be hot. The liquid is not the heat, it is the element of water (character of cohesion and flow). The heat is the element of fire.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: Then you put your palm over the hissing vapour. It'll be hot. The heat is not the element of air (character of movement and pressure). The vapour is not the element of heat. The vapour and steam is the element of air, the heat is the element of fire that is burning in the elements of earth and water. The heat is the hotter form of fire (energy/temperature). There is also a cooler form of fire that associates with the five elements. A bottle of fizzy drink in a refrigerator is a good example of the cooler form of fire (water, earth-chemicals, gas, cold, and space).

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: You can even compare the five elements from a pot of stew with the five elements of the earth and the universe. You may use modern terms and nomenclature for these elements, but it's the same. It is essentially similar in the elementary level. There are only five elements. These are the basic building blocks. Apart from them there is nothing (*Natthi-kinci*).

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: Then do you have any difficulty to view the inner and the outer five elements together and regard them as similar and that they overlap?

KT: It's not difficult, Sire, I can try.

M: If you look into yourself, you'll find nothing apart from these five elements and your consciousness.

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: Now I will go to the element of *Vinnana* (consciousness). "*Namatati Namam*." It is called *Nama* as it has an affinity for and leads to the object of attention. (The last thought at the verge of dying will have an affinity for a rebirth and it leads to the object of attention at that moment for the place of rebirth. Usually it will relate to a sensual thought and the place will depend upon the purity of the thought, which is rather less pure and results in the four states of deprivation. It is very hard to control the thought and is even harder at such a stressful time as dying. Only those who have practiced *Vipassana* effectively can control the thought in such a situation.)

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: The five elements that I have told you earlier are the constituents of the body mass. "*Ruppatati kho*, *bhikkhave*, *tasma 'Rupan'ti vuccati*," (S.ii.71) are the Buddha's words that come from the *Khandavagga Pali*. Dear disciples, (*Samgha*) the Dhamma of the element of earth, fire etc. are unstable and insubstantial as they change and vary with temperature. That is why they are called *Rupa*. To summarize, the six elements are condensed into *Rupa* (body, matter) and *Nama* (mind, consciousness).

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: The congregation of *Pathava, Tejo, Apo, Vayo* and *Akasa* elements is called Rupa, matter elements. The movement, the

vibration and destruction of these matter particles are perceived and registered by consciousness that is called *Vinnana*.

KT: Yes, Sire, only now I know how to differentiate between these two.

M: Do you really understand what I have just told you? You all know that the outer five elements are not you or any person, but you still regard the inner five elements as persons and beings. If the composition of inner five elements is not substantial, as they appear to be, and is perceived equally as a composition of outer elements, will you still regard them as persons or beings?

KT: No, my Lord.

M: Will you still regard them as you, I, a male or a female. Males and females are a composition of the six elements. It is only a conditioned belief, a concept that doesn't exist in reality. The only real things that exist are the six elements: the nature of hardness and softness (*Pathava*), cohesion and flow (*Apo*), hot and cold (*Tejo*), expansion, compression and movement (*Vayo*), the space, the partition in-between these elements (*Akasa*), and the consciousness (*Vinnana*).

KT: Yes, Sire.

M: Right, if someone tells you that they are persons, animals and beings you will not accept if you understand the real nature of these compositions. You will reply that they are accepting them as such out of ignorance (out of the lack of wisdom and intuition).

KT: Yes, my Lord.

M: Then Maung Kyaw Thein you now understand clearly that they are *Rupa and Nama* elements? You understand what I have told you tonight, don't you? I have explained how to eliminate *Ditthi* (false view) using *Paticcasamuppada* (dependant origination). You must meditate, watch and know the arising and dissolving phenomenon of mind and matter.

Development of higer levels of insight wisdom

M: If the arising and dissolving phenomena of mind and matter is perceived, it is *Yathabhuta-nana*, the logical and sound knowledge. If aversion for arising and dissolving phenomenon develops it is *Nibbida-nana*, the insight of aversion for existence. If the arising and dissolving phenomena of mind, and matter ends, it is the *Magga- nana*, the insight on liberation. You must remember these very well.

KT: Yes, my lord.

M: *Yathabuta* and *Nibbida-nana* see the arising and dissolving phenomenon. The *Magga nana* sees the end of the arising and dissolving phenomenon. Your duty is to work now.

KT: Yes, Sire, my duty is to work.

M: Now you go and meditate.

Epilogue

These discourses are translated from a collection of discourses compiled and transcribed by U Kyaw Thein and published by the *Mogok Vipassana* Society. As the discourses were delivered extemporaneously a few lines have been edited to lend themselves better to reading. However, care was taken to edit only obvious repetitions that were of mere rhetorical value and to edit some of the sentence constructions that were difficult to translate directly from Myanmar. I must admit that I had to struggle with the *Pali* terms and spellings, which were a bit different from Sinhalese and Western *Pali*. Despite these difficulties, I have tried my best not to deviate from the original description. Potential error in the translation is however, unavoidable and it is solely the translator's responsibility if there was any gross error in the article.

Tin Htut, Sheffield, UK, 6 July 2000

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Who is Jesus? A comparative study on Christianity and Buddhism



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